

COUNTRY LIFE

THE JOURNAL FOR ALL INTERESTED IN
COUNTRY LIFE AND COUNTRY PURSUITS. ILLUSTRATED.

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MISS MURIEL WILSON.



THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits.

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EDITORIAL NOTICE.

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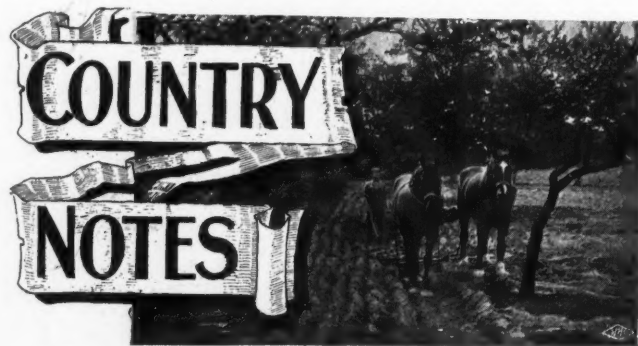
Illicit Commissions and Horse Sales' Bill.

WHATEVER may be the ultimate fate of Lord Russell's Bill, whether it succeeds in becoming law in the shape in which it leaves the House of Lords, or whether its scope be extended or its provisions curtailed, there can be no doubt in any reasonable mind that its existence is amply justified by the wholesale corruption that exists in many business circles. Moreover, its fundamental principle is specially welcome to us, for there is no class of individual that is more consistently the victim of the abominable commission system which prevails than the country gentleman, who, in addition to insidious attacks upon his purse in connection with the transactions of ordinary business life, is all too frequently dependent upon unscrupulous agents, who fleece him unblushingly, whilst professing to have only his best interests at heart. In the course of the debate upon the Bill in the House of Lords, allusion was made to the fact that it was the custom for carriage builders to pay commissions to coachmen on the purchase of a vehicle, but no references whatever appear to have been made to a still more vicious, but nevertheless rampant, system of blackmail which exists in a far too large number of stables. The corn merchant, the harness maker, the farrier, and other tradesmen who may be honoured by the custom of a well-to-do horse owner have each and all of them to contribute towards the income of the head man, and if they are illiberal in their donations towards this undeserving object, they soon discover the mistake to their cost.

Most objectionable, offensive, and dangerous of all such practices, however, are those which prevail in connection with the purchase and sale of horses, as in this direction lies a positive danger to the lives and safety of the public. So long as the commission paid to the stud groom or coachman is sufficiently bountiful, every effort will be made to rub along with an animal which may be absolutely unsuited by temper or other reasons for the work it is put to, for it is the custom of the horse trade to submit to blackmail, and the worse the owner's bargain, the greater the "backsheesh" for his man. Unfortunately, many horse owners are completely in the hands of their servants, as they possess no knowledge of horseflesh themselves, and consequently are compelled to trust to their men when animals are purchased. Probably they are unaware of the custom of the trade, and little dream that out of the two or three hundred pounds they may pay, some twenty or thirty find their way into the pockets of their men. A few dealers have tried the experiment of refusing to be blackmailed, but even if they occupy a sufficiently assured position in the trade to render it possible for them to carry out their resolution, it has often been at the cost of much trouble and vexation to themselves. The horses they may have sold get badly bitten, improperly driven, and worried in their work in so many ways that the inexperienced owner is readily made to believe the story of the misdeeds, but he seldom is capable of attributing these to their proper cause.

Even in the case of sales by auction, it is by no means an uncommon practice for vendors to promise commissions to the stud grooms who attend to purchase on behalf of their absent and all too-confiding masters. These worthies being well known to each other, occasionally combine to run up the price of certain lots which some of their particular friends may require, thereby increasing the commission paid, and trusting that a similar good turn may be done them another day by the person they have served. Their masters may complain at the price, but when told that "Mr. So-and-so's man ran me up and wanted the horse badly," they are probably quite satisfied that if he has not secured so cheap an animal as he desired, he has at all events prevented it from falling into the hands of someone else.

We trust, therefore, as we believe, that with the country gentleman element as strongly represented as it is in Parliament, Lord Russell's Bill will be suffered to pass the House of Commons in as far as possible its present form, as it is a measure which cannot fail to meet with the unqualified approval of the mercantile community. Amongst those who deal in horses it will be warmly welcomed at all events, for it will be the means of ensuring full justice being done to the animals they dispose of, and at the same time relieve them of the unpleasant necessity of adding to the prices of their wares in order to satisfy the demands of a rapacious servant in quest of perquisites. We feel justified in prophesying, moreover, that the less experienced order of horse owners will, should the Bill become law, experience far fewer disappointments with, and receive less complaints about, the additions they make to their studs. Consequently, with the sole exception of the commission-seeking groom or coachman, all parties concerned will directly benefit by Lord Russell's most admirable and much-needed addition to the laws of the country.



ALTHOUGH the war itself moves slowly there is no lack, but rather a superabundance, of matters to discuss in connection with it, and the most important of them is the publication of the Spion Kop despatches. Concerning this matter we are in a position to make one or two statements of fact from the inner point of view. The delay in publication was, we believe, due to the reluctance of Lord Roberts to sanction the publication of observations which, however just and proper in a confidential communication, must obviously be wounding to his brothers in arms. It was a very natural reluctance. Then it is stated that immediately upon receiving notification of the purport of the despatches, Sir Redvers Buller tendered his resignation. He could hardly do otherwise. But the resignation was not accepted. If the resignation was not to be accepted, why were the despatches published? Perhaps we shall hear a satisfactory answer during the debate, but it certainly passes the wit of this particular man to invent one.

At the great Service clubs, at the Senior, which its members call the "Cripples' Home," at the Junior, at the "Rag," and at the Naval and Military, the publication of the despatches is regarded as a very serious matter indeed, because if this practice is to be pursued in future it is hopeless to expect absolutely frank and candid reports from the commanders-in-chief of field forces in the future. They will, no doubt, always be willing to tell the exact truth officially and confidentially. But it is one thing to report to the War Office and quite another to hold a comrade up to public scorn and indignation.

Then to what does Lord Methuen owe it that he has escaped scot free so far? Most likely the answer is that there are saving virtues in red tape. Lord Methuen's original despatch was sent at the time when Sir Redvers Buller was in supreme command. It belonged, so to speak, to the præ-Robertsian era. It was wrong in point of form; it was remitted for rectification; and in its rectified form it was held to relate back to the Bullerian era. But then did not the Gatacre despatch relate back to the same era?

Meanwhile the sensation of the week has been the dinner at the Reform Club to Sir William McCormac and to Mr. Treves, and the frank courage of the last-named great surgeon concerning the ladies at the Cape. If there were such an honour as a social Victoria Cross, Mr. Treves would certainly have won it, for no action of any man during the war is comparable in point of sheer valour to his outspoken speech. He has actually ventured to speak of a plague of ladies, and a plague of flies, in the same breath. Everybody, except the offenders, agrees with him; everybody who has returned from South Africa confirms him. But like Alcibiades, albeit for a different reason, he will be well advised to provide himself with a club. Still, we venture to predict, he will be safe enough for a time at any rate. It is the fashion for ladies to be in South Africa, and the fashion will be followed, even though one should rise from the dead to protest against it. So, as long as the great millinery shops exhibit in their windows costumes "for South Africa," Mr. Treves may walk in London secure. When these disappear he must carry his club, and perhaps he might also organise a bodyguard of the innumerable and grateful ladies whom he has cured.

It is comforting to note that stern measures are at last likely to be taken with the double-faced Free Staters in the neighbourhood of Bloemfontein. The reputation of being the most humane general of the century may be bought too dear, and the time has come for dealing ruthlessly with those whom the *Times* describes very wittily as "the courteous old men who handed in with regret the matchlocks of their boyhood" and then dug up "the Mausers of their old age then snugly buried in their back gardens." Moltke's precedent is the best. Any and every relapse upon the part of "contrite rebels"—that is a good phrase too—ought to be punished without mercy, even to the extent of destroying hamlets.

While our soldiers were awaiting the word to move from Bloemfontein their muscles were not allowed to grow soft with lack of exercise. We hear of various athletic sports, and most notably of a cricket match between I. Zingari and the world. The wicket is said to have been not of the best, but the cricketing talent on both sides may have been fully up to the average. All branches of athletics have their representatives in South Africa. Of Mr. John Ball we last heard from Colesberg. Our amateur champion golfer was in the best of health, and we are told that he took the prize on arrival for the yeoman who should bring his horse in best condition from the ship. It says much for the versatility of his talents and his resource.

By way of further comment on Lord Winchelsea's recent severe criticism, in a letter in the *Times*, on the inability of our scouts to detect an ambushed enemy, an inability that more than once has been painfully apparent, it is interesting to read of a new scheme for the special training of scouts that is about to be tried in America. It is designed to form a camp in Colorado, under the command of General E. V. Sumner of the United States Army. The ground is especially selected for the training of men in rough-riding, scouting, signalling, tracking, etc. One year is to be the full course of the tuition, for which the fee will be £100, including equipment, rations, and horse-clothing. Already, we are informed, applications have been numerous, and among the applicants we are glad to learn that there are some fifty from Great Britain. Yet even so we are obliged rather sorrowfully to ask ourselves why it should be necessary for them to go to America to learn all these things, why we cannot devise some scheme whereby this indispensable science of modern warfare may be learned at home?

While the military spirit in the country is so keen it seems a pity that some direction useful in war cannot be given to the overflowing energies of Englishmen who find their normal outlet

in shooting, hunting, and game playing. In all these pursuits, and especially the last, there is no doubt that the spirit of rivalry and competition is a large factor in their attractiveness. If we could suggest a mimic warfare that would contain this element of attraction, say by giving prizes, open not only to the recognised forces, but to every man in a district who cared to compete for such equestrian exercises as the "heads and posts," and such infantry encounters as the "bayonet *versus* sword" encounters, or if in any way we could make our games more after the image of the exercises of war, we should be doing so much for the formation of a potential fighting force. The time is very ripe; it only needs the inventive genius to devise the form of mimic war and revive, *mutatis mutandis*, the lists and jousts of mediæval chivalry.

Mr. Wyndham's statement in the House that the Government are using their best endeavours to give the Army in South Africa even more than it asks, especially in the matter of remounts for the cavalry and mounted infantry, will be received with the utmost satisfaction, even though it is admitted that the waste of horseflesh has been more than the original estimate. No less satisfactory, and not a little remarkable, are the figures of the shipment of horses from the Argentine, where Colonel Aspinwall has now instituted periodical horse fairs. These figures show that 19,000 horses have been shipped from Buenos Ayres, and that the loss on voyage has amounted only to an average of 2 in 1,000. Surely such a fractional percentage of loss as this speaks very highly of the competence shown in the selection and also of the management on shipboard. So many hard things have been said of the authorities that have charge of this particular department of supply that it is no less just than pleasant to find so much to say on the brighter side.

We have received from the Committee on Agricultural Education, 10, Queen Anne's Gate, a bundle of their latest publications. They ought to be scattered broadcast over rural England. In one, Mr. J. F. Hall shows from the evidence of facts that Scandinavian farmers began to prosper when their teaching was taken seriously in hand by the State. In another, Mr. J. C. Medd explains how in Canada farmers are trained to produce and prepare for market the articles most in demand in London. It cannot be said that the expense is anything but trivial when compared with the result attained. For instance, dairy instruction is provided, agricultural societies are assisted, cold storage is provided by rail and steamer to the coast and across the ocean at a yearly expenditure of £41,700. Yet the help needed at home and set forth by Mr. Lee-Warner, Professor Gilchrist, and others is refused. Those most in need of agricultural education are Mr. Walter Long and his colleagues.

The French Agricultural Budget for 1900 shows a paternal care for which we look to England in vain. It shows a total of 45,617,423fr. devoted to this branch. Among the interesting items that go to make up this amount we notice 6,000,000fr. for the Haras or military horse-breeding establishment, in addition to 1,549,166fr. for the encouragement of horse-breeding among farmers, and 5,000,000fr. for the purposes of agricultural education. The cultivation of flax and hemp that here has been kept up by private owners is there made the object of a bounty, and the French Government, too, recompense farmers for losses by catastrophe. One cannot help wondering how far the policy of the Government is responsible for changes in the industry. Ten or fifteen years ago agriculture in France was at a very low ebb indeed, but when our people were at the worst it began to recover, and very glowing pictures are given of it now. That is the best excuse for calling attention to their methods.

In the protests that have been made against an alleged intention to drain Wicken Fen it is interesting to note how greatly entomologists predominate, the conclusion being that theirs is the most popular branch of natural history. The principal object of their solicitude is the beautiful swallow-tail butterfly (*Papilio Machaon*), which lays its eggs on the uncut sedge, the larva feeding on the marsh milk-parsley. In 1859, when Stainton published his well-known manual, its only haunts were the Huntingdonshire and Cambridge Fens. Wicken Fen is the only one left. The Scarlet Tiger moth is another of its peculiar inhabitants. But the fen is dear also to the ornithologist, because here are to be found such varieties as the grasshopper warbler, the spotted fly-catcher, and, it has been said, the spotted crane, though its occurrence is probably accidental. These are the chief, but there are other objects of natural history whose extinction would be brought appreciably nearer by the drainage of the Fen.

That there is any immediate danger of reclamation we take leave to doubt. It will not pay at present. Labour is scarce, and the fenland adjacent which has been drained is not cultivated at a profit. Against this, however, we must place the fact that where the soil of the fens lends itself to fruit cultivation or

the growth of bulbs, it has been and can be reclaimed to great advantage. Naturalists, however, have the remedy in their own hands. A few years ago one of their number, who is a patriot, bought a tract of the Norfolk Broads especially to preserve the bearded tit. They could follow the example. A bit of the rapidly disappearing fenland is of as much historic interest as any other survival of the past. How could young people understand the England of Edward the Confessor's time, or follow the adventures of Hereward the Wake if nothing remained to show what the country was like in those days?

Mr. Edward Brown, the well-known poultry expert, says that somebody made him a present of a La Bresse poularde, and "I was enabled to carve for eleven people from that one bird." Wasn't it of a goose that Professor Wilson said that it was too much for one and not enough for two? How would Christopher have looked if set down with ten others to banquet on a solitary poularde? It is possible that he would suddenly have discovered a pressing engagement at his club. But though sympathising with this view, we cannot help wishing good luck to Mr. Brown, who told this story to point a moral. It is that a well-fatted fowl is better than two that are lean, and the flavour of an egg is never quite the same after two or three days from laying. Let us hope that the Poultry Organisation Society, of which he is now secretary, will both educate, teach, and improve the supply of new-laid English eggs and fat English fowls.

The golf match between the House of Commons and the Ranelagh Club ended in a very hollow victory for the Legislators by 31 holes to 18. Out of those 31 holes Mr. J. H. Wanklyn, Mr. Alfred Lyttelton, Mr. Seton Karr, and Mr. J. Heath obtained 29, and the only conspicuous player on the Ranelagh Club side was Mr. Woodbine Parish. Mr. Arthur Balfour "never found his game, and was badly beaten." Well, Mr. Balfour has other things to think of just now, and if he had played well, as he can do on occasion, there would certainly have been allusions to Nero and his fiddle.

We rejoice that Mr. Eustace Miles, holder of our gold prize for tennis, and also of the amateur championship title, had a tour in America of success second only to that of Harry Vardon, the golfer. He has won not only the amateur tennis championship of America, but also the amateur racket championship of the United States of Canada, and of the New York Racket and Fennis Club. Mr. Miles is a strict vegetarian, and should be a valuable advertisement for that creed.

"The Office of Works does not care a pin for Kew." This is an extract from a private letter, and a very welcome letter too, by one of the warmest friends of that most beautiful and useful institution, in recognition of our recent article. Our correspondent is a witness of truth. For example, there is a small adjacent eyot in the Thames which the Office of Works could have bought for a song a short time since, and it would have been an acquisition. As matters stand it will be an eyesore, for it is to become a barge-building works. The Kew authorities have really a very hard road to hoe. The men and women who really value the work which is always being done in the way of enhancing that splendid domain are really ladies and really gentlemen, silent in their appreciation, averse to raucous self advertisement. On the other side stand the nursemaids with their perambulators, the cyclists *et hoc genus omne*, who want to make Kew a popular recreation ground, and they and their advocates talk and chatter without ceasing. But may they never succeed. Kew, as it is, is probably the best-managed and the most useful institution of its kind in the world. Kew as they wish it to be would be a species of glorified Victoria Park.

Never was there a more brilliant 1st of May. And from the townsman's point of view, nowhere was it more pleasant than in Northumberland Avenue on Tuesday morning; for it was the beginning of the coaching season, and the coaches were many, and they were well loaded, and the horns were blowing, and the sun was shining. Altogether one realised that summer had come. The passengers on every coach, as they went away into Surrey, or Middlesex, or Berkshire, as the case might be, realised that it had been a late spring, and there was no May, and the apple blossom was conspicuous by its absence. But the plum blossom, which the Japanese love, and the blackthorn in billows of white, almost made up for it, and altogether it was a glorious May day.

Judging by the splendid show of blossom on cherry and plum trees the present year ought to be a grand one for these fruits, unless an unusually late frost of some severity comes to nip them or heavy gales to destroy them before the fruit is set. Even at the end of April we had ice a quarter of an inch thick in the mornings in the Southern Counties, but the frost was hardly severe enough to do harm to the prospects of fruit.

With such grand natural advantages as Ireland has, a great deal might be done to improve the inland fisheries, which could be made capable of producing far more sport and far more money. Commissions are all very well in their way, but somehow a little private enterprise does a vast deal more good than a great amount of enquiry and palaver. In the Killarney district trout angling has been greatly improved by a little attention. The rainbow trout, which were put into the Middle Lake at Muckross by the Fishery Conservators last year, appear likely to prove a great success, a few which have been taken being of a fine size for the short time they have been turned out. Encouraged by the good results attending these experiments, about 50,000 rainbow and Loch Leven trout were liberated at Killarney last week.

A glance over the list of shootings in Ireland, as contained in the list published in pamphlet form by Messrs. Braddell of Belfast, and advertised in the pages of COUNTRY LIFE, will astonish those who are in the habit of taking high-priced Scotch moors. It is, indeed, a revelation to find a shooting of 27,000 acres in the county Donegal offered for £200 per annum, and another of 11,000 acres for £80. In other counties are to be found numbers of extensive shootings to let on equally low terms, which make the gunning enthusiast's mouth water, particularly when his purse is not a plethoric one. In Messrs. Braddell's list some 270,000 acres are offered at a rental of £2,700. Low though this price seems under the present condition of things in Ireland, it is quite enough. As a general rule an Irish shooting is a very disappointing thing, but there is no reason that this should be so. Thousands upon thousands of mountain and moor in the West of Ireland, though looking an ideal venue for game, is practically tenantless in two senses of the word. The game which ought to abound there has been so neglected and poached that everything shootable is wiped out, with the consequence that no one will give even a small sum for the privilege of tramping over ground on which only a few old cock grouse are to be seen. But if private individuals or syndicates took up large tracts of country in favourable localities and preserved them carefully for a few seasons, what a different state of affairs would exist!

In parts of the country, as for instance in County Galway, Lord Ashtown has by the importation of fresh blood and strict preservation, so increased the crop of grouse that there is really excellent shooting on the Woodlawn Estate now. The same has been done on some Queen's County properties, too, with good effect, and doubtless the value of Irish shootings under proper treatment will be recognised in the near future.

By the way, the inhabitants of Dublin understand more thoroughly perhaps than any other people in this country the use of fruit trees for floral decoration. Indeed, they understand it almost as well as the Japanese. Amongst all the decorations of Dublin provided during the Queen's visit none was more glorious than one which was furnished by Nature. Halfway down the north side of Merrion Square, the same square that Lever rendered famous, was a house, down the front of which fell a cascade of white blossom. It had a pear tree trained as a creeper from the area to the eaves, and it may safely be said that nothing impressed the alien visitors more favourably. It was, in a word, beautiful; it was an example worthy to be imitated.

A parson writes to us in defence of himself and his fellows about people who come out of church and spend much of the walk home in grumbling at the temperature of the building. It has either been "so hot that one was almost asphyxiated," or "as cold as a vault." He does not at all deny the facts, but only murmurs at the visiting of all the blame on the unfortunate parson. On these days of spring when there is a cold east wind the fire has to be lighted on Saturday to warm the church thoroughly. On Sunday morning the sun is baking hot, and the church is stifling. But suppose the fire had not been lighted and the Sunday turns out to be a cold east windy day, then the church is truly as cold as a vault, even though the fire be lighted in the morning. He begs, in fact, that the vagaries of the climate may be considered in criticising the atmosphere of the church, which is, after all, at least as much a father in the personal comfort of the parson as of his congregation.

Nearly all the poetry or verse which has been written about the war is so bad, not to say such doggerel, that it gives us pleasure to quote a stirring stanza from Mr. A. P. Graves's "Reveill  ," in the promising *Londoner*.

Raise, brothers, raise
To Heaven the patriot hymn of praise.
Then your mighty dead lay down,
Garlanded with victor bays,
By veldt and town.
More to enrich the Afric mould
Than her whole hid treasure of gems and gold,
Until the angel trumpets cry
Reveill   to Christ's camp on high.

With reference to some recent observations in these notes on the difficulty of persuading fly-makers to test the colour of the materials used in making artificial flies when they get soaked with water, our attention has been drawn to an invention for which Mr. Marston, whose name is well known to every angler, has applied for protection under letters patent. It consists in the use of coloured celluloid for the flies. They are said to float better than the feathered fly, because they do not absorb water. Their colour is fixed, for it is run in while the material is in the fluid state, so that it is coloured through and through; and, above all, since they never get soaked, they do not change colour when put into water. If the advantages are only in some distant degree akin to all claimed for the invention, we all ought soon to be fishing with celluloid flies, and possibly enjoying an amount of sport hitherto undreamt of.

It comes as something of a surprise to us to learn, from a letter of Mrs. Lemon, the honorary secretary of the Society for the Protection of Birds, how large is the demand for owls for millinery and the like purposes of personal adornment. The number thus basely misused appears to be simply enormous, and one is disposed to ask oneself who kills these birds. The principal resorts of owls are preserved coverts; it is scarcely possible that they can be killed in any big numbers elsewhere; and the inference is forced on us that a very great many must find their death at the hands of keepers, who, in all probability, have received strict instructions to spare these generally harmless birds. If this is the case, we may take it that only a tithe of the birds killed are seen nailed to the barn-door, and the great majority find their way to a market whose very existence few game preservers probably have suspected.

FLOWERS IN THE GRASS.

OUR illustrations tell best their sweet tale. Flower gardening in the grass is a fascinating expression of woodland beauty brought into the pleasure ground, and shown in all its daintiness and charm at Kew and elsewhere. In this sweet disorder of Nature, who sprinkles the wayside bank and the meadow with her fragrant gifts, there is a rare delight revealed, from the time of the snowdrop onward through the spring and summer, when her ways are copied in the home garden. Flower gardening in the grass is not an assemblage of bulbs thrown into lumps merely to make a massive show. Nothing of the sort should be in view when introducing this feature into the meadows or immediate surroundings of the house, and mixtures of things for grass gardening are usually an assortment of bulbs and seeds which have no fitness for their intended place. A garden gone mad may be one description of some attempts to introduce flower gardening in the grass, and at this time we may point out a few of the usual errors committed. One is overcrowding. The daffodils in the meadow are not thrust together in dense groups, but scattered here, there, and everywhere, forming maybe pretty colonies, like the small fleecy clouds of a summer day.

No flower is more beautiful in the grass or more easily established than the daffodil. It is the first that should be tried, and in a cool soil quickly spreads. At Kew daffodils have become

thoroughly naturalised, and seed about freely until the drifts have become almost too thick. The star narcissi or incomparabilis are the best to grow in this way; their flowers are daintier than many of the trumpet kinds, and the season should close with the white poet's narcissus. Plant daffodils also in the shrubbery, in the copse, anywhere it is desirable to introduce fresh charm to the garden. It is pleasant on a warm spring morning to watch the daffodils in some copse. The writer had this experience lately in a beautiful Surrey garden. The daffodils were in a woodland of silver birch and shrub; the brown fern fronds covered the surface and made tenderer still the flowers planted in drifts and colonies; here the primrose-tinted *Pallidus præcox*, there the almost white *cernuus*, with other varieties forming little groups on every hand. It was a pleasant picture, this grouping of daffodils in a woodland, and pleasanter still to know that the bulbs had established themselves, in truth become "wild."

When the *incomparabilis* and trumpet daffodils have flown the poet's narcissus is in flower, and sweeter to look upon than even the beautiful kinds that have preceded it. The poet's narcissus seems thoroughly happy in meadow-land. It seldom fails, but increases quickly into dainty groups, masses of white flowers, which have a silvery sheen on a clear late spring evening, much the same effect being obtained from the white lily on a moonlit summer night. The daffodil, of course, is not the only



E. J. Wallis.

A BEAUTIFUL GLADE.

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flower for the grass. Our meadows tell us differently, and a list of the plants known to succeed well is given:

Fritillaria Meleagris (the snake's-head fritillary), an abundant flower in many moist meadows. Of this there are charming varieties, white, chequered, and richly coloured. We enjoy the white fritillary; it is quite as strong as any of the other kinds, and is worth making a bed of upon the lawn.

Snowdrops.

Muscari or grape hyacinths, intense blue, especially *Muscari conicum*, a flower for grassy banks too.

Bluebells (*scilla*), not forgetting the Spanish scillas, so vigorous that they are happy even amongst ivy under trees. They will be found in books under the name of *Scilla campanulata*, and there are white, rose, pink, besides the deep blue of the species.

Tulips are meadow flowers. It is interesting to try to establish the slender kinds, not the robust *T. Gesneriana* and those of that character. The sweet-scented *T. suaveolens*, the pretty *T. Clusiana*, and *T. sylvestris* are more suitable.

Saxifraga granulata and the double variety, more familiarly known as the single and double meadow saxifrage.

Ornithogalum nutans, a delightful flower for colour, quite a soft green.

Crocuses.—The deep purple-blue *speciosus*, which flowers in autumn, as well as those kinds of the spring.

Colchicums.

Snowflakes.

There are other flowers for the woodland, but these are sufficient to begin flower gardening in the grass, starting first with the daffodil in its many beautiful forms.



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FLOWER-DECKED.

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Our Portrait Illustration.

MISS MURIEL WILSON is not the least distinguished among the series of beautiful women who have come from Tranby Croft during the last few years and have fascinated society. She has been described, with justice, as one of the very best amateur actresses who has ever appeared upon the stage, and in some of the recent entertainments which have been given in the cause of charity connected with the war her assistance has been of great value.

Advice and Advisers about . . . Killing Driven Game.—III

IN one of his excellent books addressed to young shooters, Sir Ralph Payne Gallwey declares that it is all nonsense to say that the left eye can do the aiming when the gun is at the right shoulder. No doubt Sir Ralph is blessed with a normal pair of eyes, and he has, if so, had no experience of odd ones. It is, of course, physically impossible for the left eye to get into line with the false breech and the foresight of a gun, and doubtless that was in Sir Ralph's mind when he expressed the opinion quoted. It is one of those many examples of advice that may be good as far as it goes, but that may be entirely misleading to many. We all differ so much, that no hard and fast rule is even moderately safe. Although it is impossible to draw a straight line between the left eye, the false breech, the foresight, and the game when the ordinary gun is at the right shoulder, there is a possibility—nay, a probability—that eyes that are not true to each other may give the same effect to the brain when the gun is pointing at game as when it is not. Anyone with normal eyes sees with the brain but one image of any object focussed by the two eyes. But when eyes do not focus truly to each other, there are two images recognised by the brain, and there is no way of knowing which of the two is seen by the right eye and which by the left. So that it may happen that when the gun is put up to the right eye, it may, nevertheless, cover the image seen by the brain through the left eye. Anyone with normal eyes can try this by a very simple experiment. Given an object (preferably small, white and round, in the distance), let the experimentalist focus it, then let him place a finger on one or other eye-lid and press slightly. The result of this pressure will be a double image, equivalent to the double image seen by unequal eyes. It will be impossible to know which of the images belongs to the right eye; and, consequently, which to aim at from the right shoulder. This double image is a very common fault in eyesight, although it is a defect very serious only in comparatively few. That is to say, the images are not apparently far away from each other in the majority of cases. But whenever the two images are there, the right-shouldered man is just as liable to shoot at the image of the left eye, which then represents thin air, as he is to fix on the right image.

It has been laid down in books, newspaper articles, and verbally that the test for the eyes is to take a ring in the fingers, and, fixing the gaze upon an object, bring up the ring to cover it. It is then said, that if on trial the object is seen by the right eye through the ring, that the would-be shooter is right-eyed, and can shoot with both eyes open from the right shoulder. It is really no test at all. Apply it to the case last mentioned, and it is seen that the

right eye may do the squinting, but it may be at what the left eye sees. Again, I have seen one man try this experiment who invariably covered that eye which corresponded to his right or left hand according to which held the ring. But it is not really difficult for normal eyes to make the mistake of aligning the gun with one eye and putting the bead upon the game with the other; this feat results in shooting yards to one side or the other of the game. If the gun is brought up quickly and in such a way as to hide the foresight from the right eye, it is a thing very likely to happen. The thumb of the left hand often gets across the rib with some people, and then this fault is common. It may also be tried, and proved probable, by using orthoptic spectacles with the pin hole shut down small. The absence of light to the right eye will then enable the left to see the sight the quicker; and the result of this will be the cross shooting from right shoulder and left eye, that is said to be impossible. Of course such mistakes as the last mentioned can only be made when there is no time for correction in the act of shooting. The firer is probably always conscious that there is something wrong, although he will not know what it is.

On a future occasion I hope to carry the question of two-eyed vs. one-eyed shooting a good deal further. That it is very little understood is manifest when a distinguished oculist takes the wrong view in a most important daily paper. That article affirmed that no such thing as two-eyed alignment was possible; that it was impossible for the left eye to assist the right to align. It went on to say that all aiming done by the left eye from the right shoulder must be done by the muscular sense between hand and eye. But this is not so. It is difficult to say how much of the correct shooting of individuals depends upon muscular sense between hand and eye, but, as a matter of fact, given normal eyes, none of it need depend upon any other sense than the senses of the eyes.

This is an experiment that anyone can make for himself also. Let the object of aim be blocked out from the right eye by an obstruction in front of the muzzle, and the foresight blocked out from the left eye, the true alignment can nevertheless be taken through the obstruction in front of the muzzle just as if it were not there. The left eye only sees the object of aim. That is enough, for the focus of the right eye will be controlled by that of the left, and all the right eye has to do is to align the false breech and the foresight. The brain places the foresight seen by the right eye upon the single image of the game which the brain recognises by means of the left eye. That single image is the same whether two eyes or one assist to make it. This only needs a single trial to prove it correct by anyone.

But it may be urged that as the foresight in ordinary shooting is not blocked out from the sight of the left eye, that therefore with two eyes open the left would drag the foresight over to the line between it and the object of aim. This is possible; but, as a matter of fact, it very seldom does happen. Provided the right eye can see the foresight, the danger of its occurring is not much, either when the right eye can or when it cannot see the object of aim. It follows then that by means of muscular sense between the two eyes—governed by the angle described by the converging lines of sight of the two eyes—the left eye assists the right to true alignment, and therefore that muscular senses between hand and eye are credited with much more than they deserve. Indeed, if it were the latter that assists us to correct marksmanship at moving game, it might always just as easily be performed without bringing the gun to the shoulder. The hip would do equally well, or the two hands might be used without having any support for the butt end of the stock. This explanation of two-eyed shooting by actual alignment, and not merely by hand and eye going together, is not new, as it has been dealt with in "Experts on Guns and Shooting" (Sampson Low, Marston), but it is an extraordinary thing that until lately it has never been explained how the two eyes can help each other to true alignment for rifle or shot-gun; and, more curious still that a leading oculist should write to a leading newspaper to prove to be impossible the work that is unconsciously accomplished by five shooters out of ten with every discharge.

It has been said that alignment is all very well for the slow shot, but that for the man who is naturally a marksman, and uses 15,000 or 20,000 cartridges in a season, it is unnecessary, and, moreover, makes the shooter slow. There is a good deal of "side" put on sometimes, especially in the sporting papers, by

people whose accomplishments are gathered from their advice to others. One most amusing instance of the sort is where an Irish sportsman writes to an English sporting paper to say that with his right eye bandaged up he can hit and explode the cap of a cartridge at 25 yds., shooting with a Morris tube and a bullet. This is a good deal more precision than the Morris tube is supposed to be capable of, however accurately aimed and held. I am open to correction, but the Morris tube must have improved of late very much indeed if it can do anything of the kind. However, even if the statement were convincing, it would only prove one more case of an extraordinary muscular sense between hand and eye, and it would not in the least prove that the best way for the beginner to learn to shoot is to bandage up the right eye and shoot from the right shoulder.

I am in favour of taking every possible advantage of the facilities for straight shooting that a century of gun-making development has placed before me. That I am on the side of the best shots, and against the theorists, I propose to attempt to prove by a few quotations, which are as nearly a description of the methods of some of the past masters of the art as has ever appeared in print. But I should not think this worth while had not the theorists had so very much more to say than the men who do the shooting. It would be obvious to the common-sense of a child that the foresight is there to be used, had it not been for the ever increasing volume of theory that says it is not—the echo of an echo of a long ago.

Light travels so much faster than anything else, that it seems to be shooting in the dark not to make use of sights that are there—sights that it is impossible to help seeing long before the brain can tell the finger to pull trigger.

Lord Walsingham has written a good deal about shooting, but he has not often told us what many of us would like to know—how he does it himself. The only occasion on which he has described his own methods is quoted in *Experts on Guns and Shooting*, and he adds to the description: "No two people shoot exactly alike, and I will not allow myself to be led into a digression upon holding forward." Thus it seems that this crack shot fully recognises the danger of giving advice, which is one point of these articles to prove. Lord Walsingham, speaking of a correspondent, says: "The way in which a certain measure of accuracy, although by no means a satisfactory measure to myself, was attained in shooting at these wood-pigeons could scarcely be better described than in the words of your correspondent. He writes: 'I myself race the bird, as it were, in my mind without bringing up the gun; I then swing it and fire. This swing or pitch is all done in one motion.' So far I go with him entirely, but when he adds, 'and the gun is not stopped even after the trigger is pulled,' I differ from him in practice. In my case the gun is stopped at the instant of pulling the trigger, having been swung as 'nearly as possible to the exact spot the bird may be expected to reach by the time the charge can get there to intercept it.' That is very interesting; it suggests aiming at a point, in space, in front of the game, not putting the gun to the shoulder and then swinging with the game. As to the remark that the gun is stopped when the trigger is pulled, it may be that Lord Walsingham meant only that intentional movement was then stopped. It is doubtful how far it is possible to stop suddenly the rapid swing of a gun, and it is clear that a gun swinging in the direction the game is going could not be brought up by the muscles as suddenly as if it had struck a bar of wood. This method of shooting requires the most perfect timing of the trigger pull, of the ignition of the powder, and the velocity of the shot. On the other hand, a method of shooting which continues the swing after the trigger is pulled ought to neutralise any personal error of time and any variation of the quickness of ignition of the powder. Mr. Berkeley Lucy, who was and I hope is a great shot, one of the few who shoot with both eyes open with the rifle, in writing of this stopping of the gun on the pull of the trigger says that when he does it his form is worse than when he continues the swing. Lord De Grey's method of shooting is also described in the same work from which the above is quoted, but I am reminded that my limit of space has this week run out before I am ready. I may, however, say that Mr. Berkeley Lucy has described his method of shooting as differing from that of Lord Walsingham, and Lord De Grey's style is also apparently somewhat different, but these are subjects to return to.

ARGUS OLIVE.

Oyster-catchers.

ONCE when a wave of riddling imbecility was beating on our family with more vehemence than usual, someone asked, "Why is a sea-pie called an oyster-catcher?" There did not seem to be a suggestion of an answer to it other than "Because it catches limpets." The question is mentioned not because the riddle is a remarkably good one, but as an instance of the curious principle on which some things get their common names, for it is probable that no oyster-catcher has ever yet caught or tried to catch an oyster. His bill is powerful, extraordinarily powerful among the race of shore birds to which he belongs, and no doubt serves him well to wrench a limpet off a rock when the mollusc is caught unawares and not sticking "like a

limpet." But what would he do on an oyster bed? It is true that the oyster-catcher can swim, for the writer has seen him do so (if that is likely to be accepted as any evidence of the truth), and it is said that the oyster-catcher can dive, though this the writer has never seen him do. But it is also said that it will only dive under stress of circumstances, such as to escape when wounded; and in any case an oyster bed is down at any depth, from three to thirty fathoms, so the poor oyster-catcher would not find the oyster-bed a comfortable one.

Sea-pie is a much better name for him, for his general effect, as he flies up, is that of a black and white bird, a pied bird. And he loves the seaside, searching the rocks for limpets, mussels, small crustacea, annelids, and anything that comes handy. Also he has a nice bright orange bill and claws, so that altogether Nature has not looked after him by giving him any of that protective colouring which assimilates with his surroundings, and so enables him to escape the notice of his foes. Instead, it has given him a wonderful cunning and wariness. No bird appears to be able to calculate the range of gunshot more accurately, for he will fly round and about you with some share of the curiosity which seems to possess many members of the plover family, but seldom coming near enough for a gunshot to reach him should you wish to kill him. And you may wish, for in some parts—rather in Scotland than in England, according to the writer's experience—the oyster-catcher is by no means despised as an edible bird, his flesh boiling down to excellent soup, very like hare soup in flavour.

There can be no doubt that the oyster-catcher is fully aware of his conspicuous appearance. He is also sufficiently conscious that his eggs, as shown in the accompanying illustration, are singularly well adapted in their

colouring to escape observation. This is shown by his action, or by her action, let us now say, in speaking of the mother bird, when one approaches the nest. For she is always off and away from her eggs on the first alarm, knowing apparently that they are far safer in her absence than when she is there to show off the place of the nest. It is also apparent that she does not so act through any ostrich-like heedlessness and hardness of heart about the fate of her offspring, for both she and her mate keep circling round as long as a human being is near the nest, showing by voice and gesture the keenest anxiety. Even after the young are hatched the

parent birds adopt the same prudent tactics, leaving the young birds to escape notice while they take their own advertising plumage of black and white far from them. The young ones in their coats of down, that have none of the conspicuous colours of the mature plumage, understand the game perfectly, creeping to what cover they can find and there lying close and almost invisible till the danger is past. It is all a very pleasant comedy to watch. Probably the alarm-call of the parents is the signal to the children thus to keep themselves to themselves until the warning cries cease.

The old oyster-catchers seem very difficult to please about their nursery, often making several nests and leaving them before finally settling on the place in which the eggs shall be laid. Our little Jenny Wren has a similar habit of this practice in nest-building, but in her case she takes a deal of trouble about the trial nests, which are about as perfect as the elaborate and comfortably domed building in which she brings up her large family of tiny children. The oyster-catcher's nest is no such effort of architecture, consisting in not much more than the shingle with a few bits of seaweed thrown in if these happen to lie ready to hand. The nest here portrayed is rather a triumph of domestic architecture for them. Sometimes the parents are so ill-judged as to lay their eggs on a rock stack soft, from sea-level and sometimes on an islet cut off from the shore. In this case it seems impossible that the youngsters can leave the nest until able to fly, unless indeed the parents carry them or induce them to swim across. But in general they are running about on the shingle, ready to crouch and become invisible if any danger threatens, within no great number of days from their hatching out.

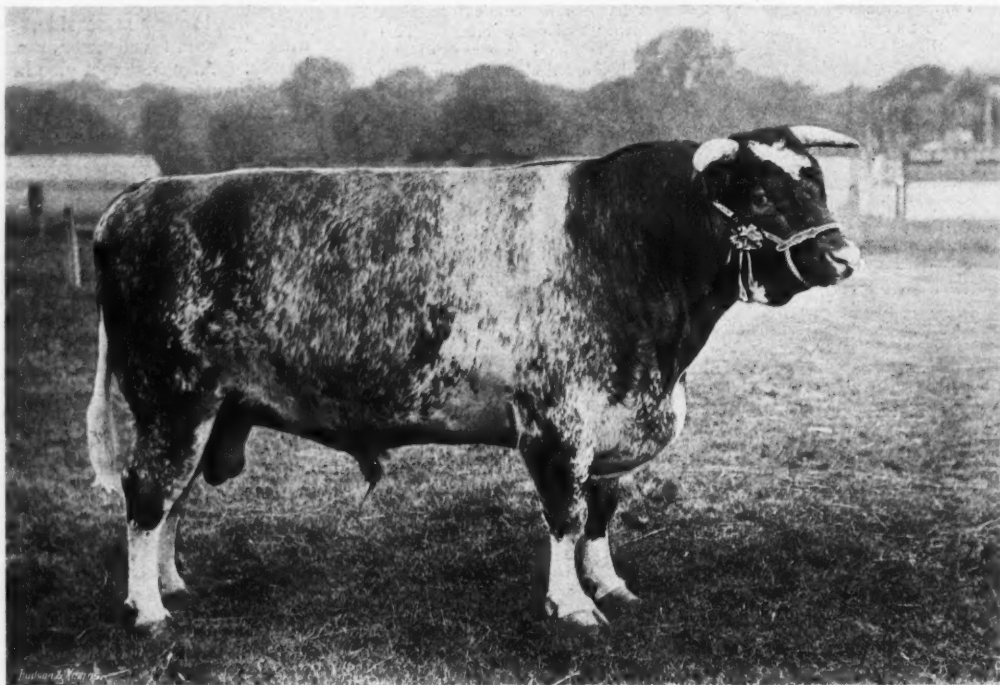


OYSTER-CATCHER'S NEST.

Dairy and Other Cattle: The Shorthorn.

At present it would be accurate to describe the shorthorn as pre-eminently the English breed of cattle, and it has held that place for a century and more. Studley Bull, 626, who, according to Coates' Herd Book, is the earliest recorded progenitor, was born in 1737; but it was not till after the famous sale of the Ketton herd, in 1810, when a thousand guineas was paid for Comet, that the rage for shorthorns began in earnest. You find them everywhere now—in every English shire, in Scotland and Ireland, on the Continent, and in our colonies. But although this proves the breed to prosper under a great variety of conditions, it is no proof that the shorthorn is a good dairy cow. It used to be bred chiefly for meat, and is so, to a large extent, still. That is why the practical dairy farmer, who is convinced of its milking qualities, is shy of the pedigree herd. He prefers them without pedigree, and his prejudice is not without some reason at the back of it. What he says, in effect, comes to this: Many succeeding generations of graziers have exerted their skill and ingenuity to develop the flesh-forming qualities of the breed at the expense of its milk—you cannot expect an animal to be equally good for the butcher and the dairy. On the other hand, the carefully kept records of many years, and the day-by-day experience of farmers, show that when a large quantity of milk has to be produced the shorthorn has not an equal. Since 1888, with a solitary exception, the shorthorn has gained highest marks at the milking trials of the Dairy Show. A good shorthorn will, on the average, produce about one-third more milk at each milking than a Jersey. Its disadvantages are twofold. For butter-making the milk is not of as good quality as that from Jerseys, and the shorthorn does not yield so long—that is, for so

non-pedigree. In other words, their sires and dams have not been carefully recorded, and the progeny are thus not qualified to be entered in the Herd Book. Many breeders deliberately refrain from doing this because they wish to cater for the custom of men in the milk trade. To the private owner it is a source of pride, and it also may be of great profit, to have pedigree stock. A case in point occurred a few weeks ago, when an



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CORNER STONE.

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owner sold for seventy guineas a calf that would not have brought twenty without a pedigree. It by no means follows that the wise plan is to buy from a famous stock. Every herd of cattle, whether it is a milk or a meat herd, has to be made. Non-pedigree cows of good quality can be purchased more cheaply than the others; but pedigree bulls should be used. Against them the farmer has a prejudice. He says they are inbred. That was

true sixty years ago, it is not so correct now. At all events, if a bull is in the Herd Book, you may find out exactly to what extent, if any, he is inbred. If he is not, then you are in the dark—he is very likely to be more inbred than the other. What often happens is this: The farmer may have from ten to thirty cows and a bull or two; probably there is one of the kine an especially good milker, and in good time she has a likely-looking calf. "I'll make a bull of him, it's the best strain we have," says the farmer, and in due course the old bull goes to the butcher, and the young one is used with his sisters and half-sisters.

When no record is kept it is impossible to say to what extent this has been done; you are therefore safer with a pedigree bull; then, if a careful record be kept, in four generations your stock are qualified to go on the Herd Book. In this connection it may be pointed out that the

variety of shorthorns known as Lincoln Red, though for some years past it has had a Herd Book all to itself, is, in some cases, admitted also to the Herd Book of the Shorthorn Society. It was founded on what is called "the Turnell improvement," and improved by the introduction of Durham and Yorkshire shorthorns.

There is another quality claimed for the shorthorn—it is a



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MISS BELLADRUM VI.

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many days in the year. When butter production is the chief object the Jerseys hold the field; when it is milk they yield to shorthorns.

In starting a herd it is always a moot question whether to go in for pedigree stock or not. And first let us clearly understand what the word means. It is plain that in one sense every cow has a pedigree, and we know that at every dairy show farmers enter as cross-bred animals that are pure shorthorns, only they are

general purpose cow, that is to say, after producing calves and milk for five or six years, it may be "dried" and fed up for the butcher. You cannot do this with the Channel Islands breed. When a Jersey's milk-giving days are over she goes out at a dead loss. But many dairy farmers make it a principle that each individual cow ought to make as beef as much money as will replace her with a young heifer. This worked better twenty years ago than it does now. In the market there is a good and continuous demand for the best beef. Much of it is sent from the Scotch shorthorns, the herds founded by General Simson of Pitcorthie, Mr. (afterwards Sir David) Robertson of Ladykirk, and Mr. Rennie of Phantassie; but since the importation of cheap frozen meat farmers find it very difficult to sell at any reasonable price either old cows or old ewes fatted. Still, there is no doubt that if a general purpose cow be desired there is none to equal the shorthorn. It has both a milk and a meat strain in its descent.

We have known one—but that was some years ago—that looked a mere bag of bones, even among dairy cows—it seemed to have gone entirely to milk production—yet when taken in hand for the market it laid on flesh amazingly, and was ultimately sold for £38. Something, too, is to be said for having a cow of robust constitution. The maximum quantity of milk from her cannot be taken without a considerable strain, and when this has been carried on for generations there follows a condition in which she is prone to take tuberculosis or some other of the diseases that appear to have multiplied in recent years.

After all, as we have said before, the herd of milk-givers has to be made—you must try to have it born as well. Since qualities are transmitted by descent, the utmost care has to be exercised in choosing sires and dams. It is as essential that the bull should be the son of a good milker and come of a good

shorthorns. The average milk yield of each cow between Martinmas, 1898, and Martinmas, 1899, was 7,397lb. During the same period thirty-seven Jerseys were kept, and the average yield of each was 6,430lb. There is also a herd of red-polls that gave an average of 7,033lb.—better than the Jerseys, not so good as the shorthorns.

A beginner with a small establishment must not hope to rival these results for a long time; but they afford a fair



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BAPTON PEARL.

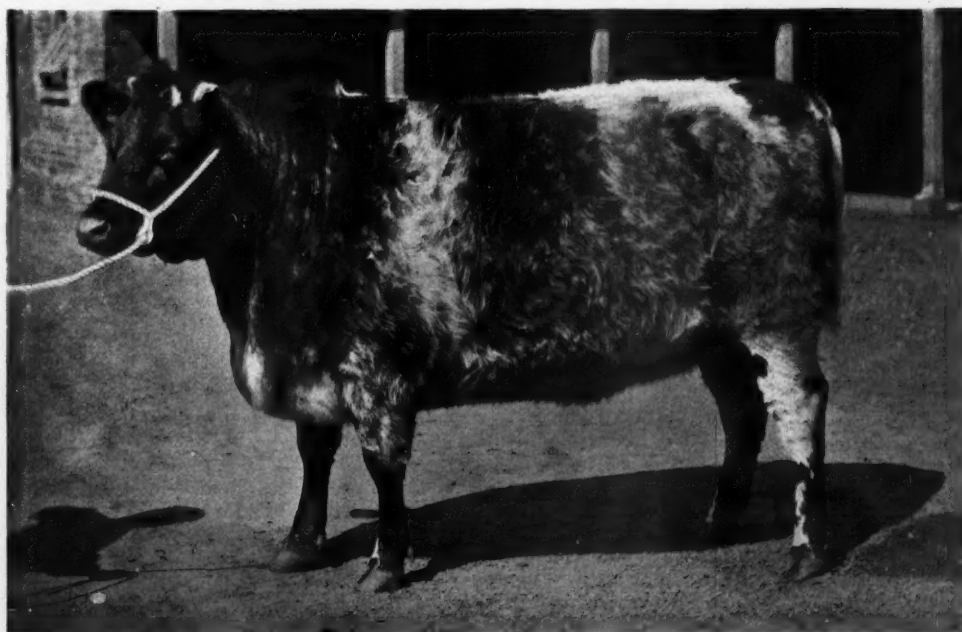
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idea of the relative merits of the breeds as far as milk is concerned. No one who has ever bred any kind of creature needs to be told that, merely because a heifer has come on both sides from a right strain, therefore she is bound to be a good dairy cow. The chances are in favour of that occurring; but after all the pains possible have been taken to select good parents, a calf not infrequently disappoints expectation. In buying, therefore, a great deal depends upon personal judgment, and that is an accomplishment only to be gained from experience. You can no more learn to pick out a good dairy cow from

reading than a general can learn to fight from the perusal of books on strategy. But that a dairy cow should have dairy points is self-evident. As a first-rate authority says: "A good dairy cow should be what is termed wedge-shaped, with great depth of body, well-sprung ribs, thin, soft skin, fine chine, clean, fine neck, long head, with fine horns." If her udder be full, have her milked before buying; it should be elastic, and should shrink after the process; it ought to be well set-up behind and come well forward in front, with the teats evenly shaped, not too large, and set wide apart. The best dairy bull ought not to be in such contrast as is sought for by those breeding for meat. He is more likely to produce good milkers if he possesses some of the fine feminine characteristics—a cow-like head, thin skin, fine throat, and so on.

It has always been a custom to let the calves of shorthorns suck for a time, but when a good deal of milk is required this practice ought to be dispensed with. Should a calf remain any

length of time with its dam there is a great upset on removal, the cow bellowing and going about in a distress that affects her yield perniciously. But if, as is usually the case with the Jerseys, the calf be removed at birth, she never misses it, and, in the dairyman's phrase, lets down her milk much more kindly. A cow that has suckled her calf never does that. From the beginning a careful daily record of her yield should be kept. It is by systematic observation, the ruthless weeding out of all that do



Hills and Saunders.

CICELY.

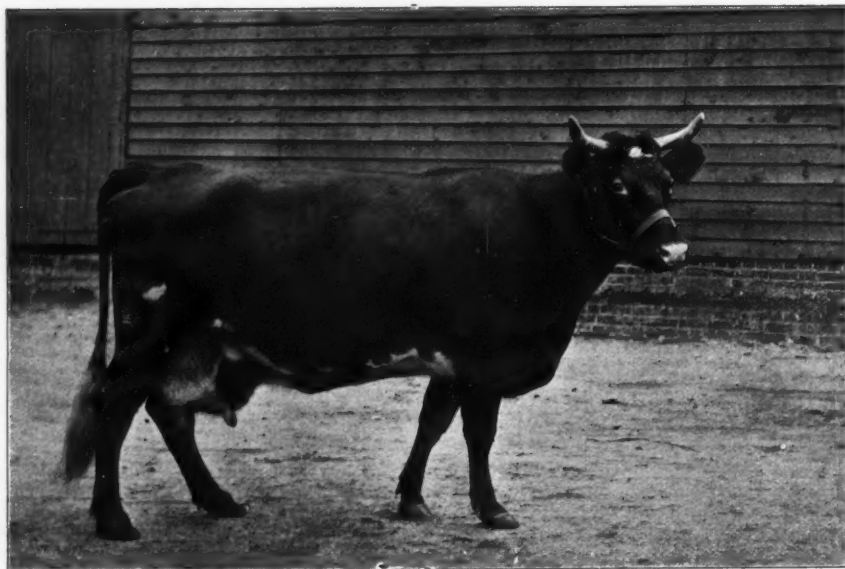
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milking strain as it is that the cow should milk well, if this is to be the characteristic of the offspring. Very careful records are now kept at every first-rate establishment of the periods of lactation and milk yields of each cow. Some of these are indeed done with a thoroughness that proves to demonstration the characteristics of a breed.

Here, for instance, is a valuable fact. At Tring Park, Lord Rothschild's dairy, there is a herd of twenty-one dairy

not reach a proper standard, that are non-breeders, poor milkers, or calve prematurely, and by unceasing care in the choice of sire and dam, that a really fine herd is eventually made. And we believe success more likely to follow if "the general purpose" be not studied too much, that is to say, if the owner concentrate the whole of his energy on the development of this one characteristic. The same cow will not be excellent in two ways—at laying on flesh and giving milk. And one quality can be developed only at the expense of the other. Finally, as has been said, the refrigerator has spoiled the market for cow beef.

Our illustrations are all of very typical shorthorns. The first, CORNER STONE, took championship honours at the Highland and Agricultural Show in Edinburgh last year, and belongs, or belonged, for we have heard of his being sold, to Mr. A. M. Gordon of Newton Inch. It will be noticed that he represents the butcher's model of the breed. The same thing may be said of the heifer BAPTON PEARL, one of a famous stock. She brought the first prize at Maidstone last year to her owner, Mr. Deane Willis. The second is Miss Alice de Rothschild's beautiful



WILD QUEEN II.

record is the splendid one of 9,836lb. from March 5th to September 24th, 1898, and in the succeeding year 11,719lb., is the most eloquent tribute to her quality.

Those who admired the Queen's grand shorthorn heifer, CICELY, at Maidstone, where she took first and champion honours, as she did also at the Edinburgh Highland and Agricultural Show, will be glad to see the latest photograph of this noble animal and to see how splendidly she is developing, as she was comparatively young at the time of the exhibition. For the picture we are indebted to the courtesy of Mr. William Tait of Windsor.

cow, MISS BELLA-DRUM VI. Though suggestive of beef, it being quite understood that show animals are above ordinary farmyard condition, her "milky" face and good udder proclaim her fitness for the dairy too. She also was first in her class at Maidstone, and may fairly be described as a general purpose cow. The fifth, WILD QUEEN II., is from Lord Rothschild's herd at Tring Park, and is as fine a specimen of the dairy shorthorn as one could wish to see. The proof of the pudding is in the eating, and the fact that her milk

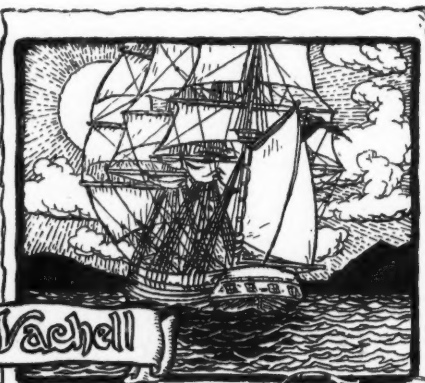
John Charity

A Romance of Yesterday

Containing certain adventures and love passages in Alta California of John Charity, yeoman of Cranberry Orcas in the County of Hampshire, England as set down by himself.

Edited by

Horace Amesley Vachell



CHAPTER XVIII.

A TIGER-LILY.

NEXT day my eyes were peeled for a sight of the red rose. I knew that I should see Magdalena at the threshing of her aunt's grain, an occasion, of course, for merry-making. The dame owned many acres around Monterey, which, with the adobe house, formed a portion of her late husband's estate. Everybody rides in California, but as the corral, wherein the grain was threshed, was less than two miles from our lodging, I asked Courtenay to go afoot. He declined, pleading an engagement. Letty was present.

"We don't amuse him, Jack," she said, softly; yet her blue eyes were flashing scorn and jealousy, and her lips were compressed as if she feared that her anger might leak from them. Courtenay left the room. I held my peace.

But, later, as Letty and I were climbing the second hill on the road to the threshing, my cousin began abruptly: "Dear John, I am miserable."

"Good Lord!" I exclaimed. "Let us sit down, and then you can tell me all about it."

"No, no," she murmured; "words won't mend the matter." None the less she sat down under a big live oak and poured out her troubles. As she talked her pretty face began to pucker, and long before she had finished tears were trickling down her cheeks. I took her hand and held it tight. We had often sat thus as children, and it seemed hard to believe that we were thousands of miles from Cranberry Orcas, and further still from that happy childhood.

"He has tired of me, John. He took me from your mother and father, and—'tis cruel, cruel!"

I would have paid a round sum had I been able to swear that she had no cause for tears. For Courtenay's love seemed indeed to have flitted from her. On this account my own heart had been sore. I had ever feared that the match between Sir Marmaduke's son and a country lass would prove a misfit. And yet, noting how cleverly she adapted herself to him, how vastly she had improved in wit and manners, and also in beauty, knowing, too, that love is the alchemist who can transmute even the base metal of passion into sterling affection, I had hoped also against my fears. What was evil in my foster-brother had begun to bloom and blossom in this lovely land. He was far from those influences and traditions that are as a buckler to many a home-keeping Briton. And he had never learned to say no. All this and more filtered through my mind.

For the moment I hated the Epicurean who had torn a primrose from a hedgerow and left it to wilt beneath a scorching sun; but when I began to abuse him (and I did not measure adjectives) the wife clapped her hand to my mouth, and sobbed harder than ever.

Well, what could I do then, in the name of the Sphinx, but take this trembling creature into my arms and kiss away her tears? Truly a man's arms are a very present help in trouble to a weak woman. And she, poor dear soul, laid her wet face on my shoulder and hugged me tight. And then, as the devil would have it, who should come riding by but Estrada, Soto, and Magdalena. The dust lay thick as a Persian carpet on the road, and their horses were unshod.

Before I could release Letty the trio had passed. The old Don showed his breeding; not a smile twisted his grim lips. Soto chuckled and twisted his blue-black mustachios. Magdalena

flaunted a scornful, fine-lady contempt, very maddening to see. Then she struck her horse and galloped on, as if anxious to place what distance she could between a false lover and his lady.

Letty, covered with confusion, entreated me to return to Monterey, but my pride forbade this, so we took the road again very soberly.

"I shall tell her the truth," said my cousin, whose tears were now dry. "I can make it right between you."

"Letty," said I, "the rose was not in her hair."

"I certainly did not see it, my poor John."

"She is of a jealous disposition," I muttered, and my tone was so mournful that Letty laughed for the first time that day.

"We all are," she retorted, "when—we really love. You have her heart, Jack. Don't fret."

Presently we reached the corral and found a couple of raised seats. The manner of threshing grain in Alta California was like this: Into a corral, built for the purpose around smooth hard ground, and filled with wheat in the shock, is driven a manada of mares; and then a vaquero, cracking his cuerda, drives the mares round and round the enclosure till at length the grain is trampled out of the straw. To one accustomed to old country methods this primitive function is not without charm.

Magdalena and Soto were opposite, and I could hear my dear laughing and talking in a voice louder than usual. Soto was grinning and grimacing like an ape; and the fellow looked so well outside his big bay gelding (the Californians and Mexicans never ride mares), and the handsome beast pranced and curvetted in such perfect accord with its rider, that I felt the fiercest pangs of jealousy. The old Don was riding slowly round, and when he passed me I caught his cold eye. He cut me dead. My rage at this insult was suddenly cooled by a misadventure that befel an urchin perched on the top rail of the corral. We had marked the little dare-devil already. He was throwing pellets of clay at the smoking backs of the mares, and now and again would swing down (hanging by bare legs to the bar) and try to slap the vaquero as he raced by. A more audacious attempt to knock off the vaquero's sombrero had caused him to lose his balance, and a second later a shout from the crowd proclaimed a fall. We could see him sprawling in the straw, half stunned and scared out of his wits. The mares had just passed, but if they completed another circuit their sharp hoofs would surely make mincemeat of the lad. I caught a shriek of horror from Magdalena, and then I saw Soto's bay breasting the barrier. It was a fine leap, finely taken, for jumping fences is not a sport practised by Californians. The horse topped the bar, and landed with a stagger, but Soto steadied him cleverly, and sent him at a gallop across the corral. What followed was a pretty piece of work. As the leading mare was within 20 ft. of the child, Soto swung out from the saddle, grasped the urchin by his shirt (he had little else in the way of clothing), and lifted him from the ground. At the pace he had set 'twas an amazing feat, for the bay turned sharp at the rails, and as he turned the Mexican swooped for the boy. Then holding his prize across the saddle, Soto thundered on ahead of the mares amidst the wild yells of the spectators. A minute later he rode out of the corral to receive the smiles and congratulations of Magdalena.

Quijas touched my arm.

"Ho, ho!" he said, slyly. "Take care, my son, take care. That sort of thing drives our maidens crazy. See, she was pale as a snowdrop yesterday; to-day her cheeks are as warm as thine. So thou didst play the Jew last night. Fooled the father and the padre. *Ojala!* Did it avail thee? Thou hast a sour look. Soberly, my son, and speaking in thy true interest, thou dost ask too much. What! 'tis a cry for the moon."

I plucked up spirit to answer him, but his jests bit like acid.

"The baby who cries not, father, never gets the milk."

"*Bueno!* I forgive thee the pranks of last night. Thou didst embrace opportunity, but—"

"So did you, father," I whispered. "And what did she say when you gave her the rebozo?"

"My son, that does not concern thee. She mocked not a friend. See now—thou must look elsewhere for a wife. *Hasta luego.*"

He pushed on through the crowd, a friar again, robed in piety, of whom all foot passengers craved a benediction. I wondered what Tia Maria had said to him. The stout dame was no longer my enemy, but she dared not offend her brother, not even to please Jaynes. For that matter, the ancient mariner, whose voice I had often heard above the raging of a tempest, sat mute in the presence of the widow. She rated him unmercifully if the smell of rum was upon him, and he spoke of her to me, privately, as "the skipper." Yet he had come to a safe anchorage in Pactolian sands, and the dame in melting mood was sweet as *panocha*.

And now, how to make my peace with Magdalena racked my brains. I despatched another letter to her by the hand of Solomon. 'Twas returned unopened.

During the days that followed, Letty—to my intense annoyance—received marked attentions from de Castañeda. Why she tolerated him is a question that has been asked and not yet answered; instinct should have warned her that here was a

hooded snake poised for a deadly stroke. He had, of course, the guile as well as the venom of the cobra. And hence the woes that befel us. The best of women is a creature of ambushes, of surprises and disguises. Letty had always seemed to me a simple soul, transparent as crystal, white as a moon-flower. But now, forsaken by her husband, homesick, and lovesick, she assumed the motley of folly and caprice, the bilious yellows of jealousy, the scarlet of anger, pigments hourly mixed and stirred by her handsome lord. He, for his part, loving peace and mirth, held aloof. He had worked—so he said—for many months, and his holiday fell upon feast days when licence stalked unbuked even in friar's robes. Can you wonder that poor little Letty deemed herself the unhappiest wife in Christendom?

I ought to have scolded her, but I had not the heart.

Magdalena I had not seen since the threshing, save at a distance, but I learned from Courtenay that Soto was in constant attendance, and when I passed him in the street he wore the simper of an accepted lover.

"The truth is this," said Courtenay, to whom, by the way, I had not confided the facts, "women, old John, are kittle cattle. Magdalena has tired of you, even as Letty has tired of me."

At this amazing statement I laughed bitterly.

"Look at the way she is treating me. She imposes the burden of sour looks and cutting words, yet when I try to explain she turns aside an adder's ear. Damme, 'tis taxation without representation."

I really believe that he counted himself an injured person. Yet I was too angry to look at the thing in its humorous light.

"My sympathy, Courtenay, is with Letty."

"Good God!" he exclaimed, "you look at me as if I had ridden rough-shod through the Decalogue."

"You may have broken no laws. You are like to break the sweetest, truest heart in the world."

He was certainly affected, but after his fashion tried to laugh the matter off.

"You exaggerate, old John. Would she have me for ever dangling at her apron strings?"

"Ay, she would, for she loves you; and you ought to be philosopher enough to know that you can only take from the bungle of life's barrel what you pour in at the spigot. Letty is no fine city madam, but a country lass."

"She has the looks and spirit of a countess."

"The spirit, Courtenay, is a pale ghost, believe me."

He raised his handsome brows and left me. I was sorry for myself, for his selfishness had seemingly undone me, and desperately sorry for Letty, the little lass I had pelted not long ago with cowslip balls and hung with daisy chains. This was her dark hour, and the farthing dip called advice only emphasised the gloom.

"He makes merry, and so shall I," she said.

"Don't trifle with happiness, Letty."

"Has it not trifled with me?" she asked sharply. "I find that my hero is a—butterfly."

Time, as a rule, may be trusted to mend hearts, and I was too busy just then with my own troubles to pay much heed to the bickerings of others. Faithful to her promise, Letty demanded an interview with Magdalena, from which she returned with flashing eyes and scarlet cheeks. "I congratulate you, John," she said, sharply. "You have had a narrow escape." And not another word would she vouchsafe me.

Meantime, we were watching, watching, watching for the white wings of Castillero's barque. I often wondered in these days whether ambition's game is worth the candle. Uncertainty fills many a coffin, and no man's nerves are proof against the impending thrust of a puñal. Doubtless the lovely Martina Castro shed many tears, and fingered impatiently her bridal finery. But my chief continued as cool and impassive as a block of ice.

"You look unhappy," he said to me one morning in November, "and your cheek is growing thin and pale. *Dios!* Wipe these worries from your face, my poor boy. Fools can afford to fret, wise men must smile. You have the air of one who has had the doors of Paradise slammed in his teeth."

"And that," said I, gloomily, "is exactly what has happened to me."

Inaction, too, bred blue devils. Pending the arrival of the comisionado the business of state lay somewhat in abeyance. Nor could I doubt that the plans of our enemies, cleverly hid from us, were nearly ripe for execution. I guessed as much from de Castañeda's extreme civility to me. Treachery sits at ease on some faces. The Mexicans were bland and smiling; the old Don, on the contrary, was puckered with frowns.

"You are sure that your handsome friend is only with these fellows and not of them?" said Alvarado. "*Bueno*, let us test him. I appreciate the apothegm: 'Deceive me once, it is your fault; deceive me twice, it is mine.' If he is caught in their mesh, he will refuse to leave Monterey, will he not?" I admitted as much, and he continued: "I think a change would do you good, Juan. Go into the Carmelo foothills for a week, my friend,

and take Valence with you. If he refuses to accompany you, I shall draw my own conclusions."

"But, your Excellency, I cannot leave you—now."

"You will do as I tell you," he replied, coldly.

"And the Señora Valence?" I urged, for I was sore at leaving my patron. Yet he had the habit of command, and I was his servant.

"Take her with you," he said, curtly.

Accordingly, I asked Courtenay if he were not keen to kill a fat buck, and, somewhat to my relief, he approved what he called an outing. He mentioned, for the thousandth time, his work aboard the Heron; and when I told him that he deserved a holiday, gravely agreed with me. Thus it will be seen that a selfish, pleasure-seeking life may play the deuce with that gracious gift of the gods—a sense of humour. Then I dropped a discreet hint concerning Soto and de Castañeda, but he laughed me into silence, calling me a damned suspicious old ass. I regret now that I held my peace; ridicule will bridle even a shrew's tongue.

And here I am tempted to throw a pebble at my kind chief. The ways of the Latin are not lightly to be apprehended by the Anglo-Saxon. Would to God that Alvarado had been more candid with me. It seems that he knew that my life was in danger, and that he took this opportunity of considering my safety before his own. And knowing—far, far better than I did—the character of Castañeda, he wished Letty to be safe and snug in the foothills, out of ken of the scoundrels who encompassed her. And, alas! had he only made these matters clear to me, the ends he had in view might have been accomplished. Instead, he merely said, curtly:

"Be mum, Juan, about your destination. A man cannot be stabbed when his enemies do not know where he is. Forget not to muzzle your friend. You will start to-morrow."

"To-morrow!" I echoed. "To-morrow!"

"Certainly—the sooner the better."

'Twas useless to ask for reasons he chose to withhold; so I returned to Larkin's, and found my foster-brother hot-foot for the chase, diligently cleaning his rifle. He carelessly agreed to speak of none of our plans, but added that in his opinion such mystery was absurd. Just then Letty came in, and, to my consternation, flatly refused to accompany us.

"You *must* come," said her lord.

"Oh, indeed! My wishes, of course, should curtsy to your convenience. Let me tell you I shall not go anywhere—under the lash."

"You deliberately disobey me?"

Her face dimpled with derisive smiles.

"Why not?"

Then she turned to me.

"Dear Johnnie, why should I leave this comfortable house to gratify Courtenay's whim?"

"I am your dear Johnnie, and you are my dear Letty; but, madam, you are also a coquette, and hang me if I'll dance to such measures as you have set of late."

"Let her stay," growled Courtenay. "She would spoil our fun with her tantrums," and he rubbed viciously the barrel of his rifle.

She stood eyeing him disdainfully, and I confess that her obstinacy exasperated me. I had yet to learn that sympathy between the sexes argues—according to the law of periodicity—antipathy. Letty's love for Courtenay had touched her to fine issues. But, alas! Love's rule is also the yard-stick of hate. A woman measures gain by loss.

"Courtenay," she said, nervously, "you cannot break me as the colts of this country are broken—by abuse." I am sure she would have melted with one warm word, which we withheld. "I wish you good sport," she continued, "and also good-bye. What! Not a word? How cross you both are!" Then she walked to the door, and paused on the threshold, a slim, gracious figure, daintily clad in thin muslin, framed in ancient oak. "Good-bye," she murmured. "Good-bye, old John. Good-bye, Courtenay."

My foster-brother turned

his back and walked to the window. Letty laughed ironically, and closed the door.

"Go after her," said I. "A kiss will adjust this business."

"No," he answered obstinately; "I won't go."

So I went instead, and found her standing at the other end of the corridor that ran the length of the house. When I urged her to obey her husband, she refused emphatically to leave Monterey.

"I have more than a woman's reason, John. Good-bye, dear. Perhaps I shall have news for you on your return."

"Why good-bye?" I asked, puzzled more by her tone than by her words. "We do not leave till to-morrow."

"I shall sleep to-night at the Casa Estrada."

"What!"

"Your Magdalena came to me this afternoon and entreated my pardon. I have forgiven her the hard words she said to me. And, John, she must melt when she learns how good and faithful you are. Be sure that I shall sing your praises."

I stared at her, sorely perplexed. Yet I remembered that Tia Maria Luisa was now my friend. Moreover, when we first came to Monterey, Letty had passed more than one night beneath the dame's roof. So misgiving melted, and hope—that had somewhat sickened—took a new lease of life. Seeing that further remonstrance would be fruitless, I kissed my cousin and bade her cheer up.

"There are few dun days in California," I whispered. "The sun will shine again, Letty, for all of us."

I did not see Alvarado again, for I was busy at Larkin's, and indeed slept there against an early start upon the following morning. But—as ill luck would have it—as we were riding out of town, whom should we meet but Don Miguel Soto; and, very naturally, he asked Courtenay whither we were bound. The careless fellow answered, before I could wink a discreet lid, "To Carmelo."

(To be continued.)

THE GREYHOUND

WHATEVER differences of opinion may exist at the present time regarding the utility or beauty of the greyhound, there is no doubt at all that the variety is one of the most ancient of all the breeds of dogs. Arrian, also known as the younger Xenophon, discoursed learnedly upon greyhounds, and there is ample evidence that the breed was well established 2,000 years ago. The date, however, of the greyhound's first appearance in these isles is lost in oblivion, though it is believed by some people that Ireland was originally his home in the West; but be that as it may, it is quite certain that the greyhound was a favourite with many early British monarchs. What the derivation of the name he bears is, is also buried in obscurity, but it may be stated that the most generally



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PEREGRINE PICKLE AND PRINCELY.

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accepted theories on this subject are two in number: First, and this is the opinion of the redoubtable Dr. Caius, that the prefix "gre" is synonymous with gradus or degree, because "among all dogges these are the most principall, occupying the chiefest place, and being simply and absolutely the best of the gentle kinde of Houndes"; and, secondly, that the "gre" represented the then prevailing colour of the variety, namely, grey.

As may naturally be expected, the appearance of the greyhound has undergone some considerable modifications since the days when he was used for the purposes of tackling deer, and doubtless the wolf, too, in some parts of the country; but the breed was always associated with the better class of sportsman, and hence the ancient saying that "you can always tell a gentleman by his horse, his hawk, and his greyhound." Of course as big game became scarcer the greyhound was put to another class of work, and now there is nothing left for him to hunt but the timid yet fleet-footed hare, and his structural formation has been altered to meet the alteration in his duties. The rough-coated variety has almost ceased to exist, even in the South of Scotland, which was its latest stronghold, and had it not been for the happy despatch which befel the degenerate sport known as "enclosed coursing meetings," it is probable that most of the old properties which characterised the breed would have been lost in the desire on the part of breeders to obtain speed. As it is, however, both stamina and cleverness are also essential to the success of modern greyhounds in many countries even now, and it is somewhat remarkable how all the three above-mentioned qualifications have been found to be combined in some very small animals. Coomassie, the winner of the Waterloo Cup in 1877 and 1878, was a particularly small and plain-looking little bitch, and only scaled 42lb. the day before she started for the Cup, whilst Lobelia, the winner in 1867, was almost as diminutive, for she scaled 44lb., the great Master McGrath being likewise small for a dog, as he only turned 52lb. On the other

hand, it may be mentioned that the heaviest bitch who ever won the Waterloo Cup was Roaring Meg, the winner in 1862, her weight being 61lb., whilst the heaviest dog was Selby, the victor in 1859, who scaled 75lb. Fullerton was another heavy-weight, as he in the course of his three wins and one division ran twice at 66lb. and twice at 65lb.

From this it will be seen that greyhounds of all weights may

be good public performers, and it is likewise an undeniable fact that even the plainest-looking ones are capable of running well. Still, whilst recognising the truth of the old adage that "handsome is as handsome does," there are certain points of beauty which all breeders seek for, and, speaking generally, the following are the principal of these: First, the back and loins, the former being square and broad, "like a beam," according to Dame Juliana Berners, and the latter slightly arched but deep, broad, and very powerful, the hind-quarters being extremely strong and muscular, the stifles

much bent, and the hocks close to the ground; second, the shoulders should be long, free from lumber, and well laid back, the chest unusually deep, but not too wide, as if such is the case the speed of the dog will be impaired, whilst the forelegs must be straight and muscular, and the feet round and compact, with good wearing soles; third, the neck should be long and lithesome, slightly bent, and obviously adapted to assist the greyhound in picking up his hare. Amongst the minor points are the head, which should be long and lean, rather wide between the ears, the latter being small and set rather to the back, whilst the eye should be bright and eager-looking when the greyhound is aroused; finally, the tail should be long and slightly curved, it being an article of faith amongst most coursing men that the tail can be used as a sort of rudder, and thereby assist the greyhound in turning, though how this principle can be applied to the hare, which is even quicker by comparison at the turn, and yet possesses practically no tail, it is hard to see; whilst the



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PRESCOT.

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A FINE LOT.

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PURSEBEARER.

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running of Lady Wodehouse's tailless High Stump, a very fair performer some score of years ago, also rather assists in demolishing the rudder theory.

The accompanying illustrations represent some famous greyhounds from the kennel of the well-known Lancashire patron of the leash, Mr. L. Pilkington, who has upon two occasions owned the winner of the Waterloo Cup, namely, Burnaby, which carried off the blue riband of the coursing world in 1888, and Thoughtless Beauty, which won in 1895 in the nomination of Mr. Carruthers. The last-mentioned bitch is depicted in the group, and amongst the other representatives of his kennel are the brindle and white PEREGRINE PICKLE, one of the fastest greyhounds of modern times, that good sterling dog PURSEBEARER, and the blue and white PRESCOT, which was fancied by many good judges for this year's Cup. The remaining illustration speaks for itself, but may be referred to as a remarkably successful example of animal photography.

IN THE GARDEN.

HYBRID RHODODENDRONS.

THE hybrid Rhododendrons are evidently becoming extremely popular, and we are not surprised. No shrub for the temperate house or the open garden where the climate is mild, as in the South of England and Ireland, is more beautiful, the flowers being produced in a large open cluster, individually of a great delicacy in colour and form. At a recent meeting of the Royal Horticultural Society several trusses came from Mr. Henry Shilson of Tremough, Perran, Cornwall. The display represented many seedlings and named varieties of beautiful colours. One called Shilsoni received an award of merit. This was lately in full bloom in the temperate house at Kew, and was raised some years ago between *R. barbatum* and *R. Thomsoni*. At Kew the two parents are also represented, so that one can see at once the parentage by the characteristics of the two species in the hybrid. The flowers of Shilsoni strongly resemble those of Thomsoni, and their colour is an intense red, whilst they have the same campanulate form. We hope those who have been hybridising beautiful Himalayan and other Rhododendrons will persevere. Dr. Stocker of Eltham, Kent, has raised several kinds, one named after himself being a very beautiful flower, large, white, touched with soft yellow towards the base of the segments.

ERYTHRONIUM HENDERSONI.

This exquisite spring flower was shown a few days ago at a meeting of the Royal Horticultural Society by Messrs. R. Wallace and Co., Kilnfield Gardens, Colchester, and the exhibitors kindly send the following note about it: "This lilaceous plant belongs to the Dog-tooth Violets, of which, perhaps, the North American species are the most varied and graceful. *E. Hendersoni* is very distinct both in colour and appearance, the flower being of a charming shade of soft rose-lilac, and the tips of the

petals slightly deeper in colour, whilst the centre of the flower is suffused with rich warm purple, giving it a most striking appearance. Erythroniums are noted for their beautiful leaf colouring, but in no species is this so conspicuous as in *E. Hendersoni*. The base of the leaf and flower stalks is of a deep maroon, the leaf itself being wonderfully marbled, and the entire plant covered with a beautiful purple sheen. For the rock garden these Dog-tooth Violets are excellent. Being plants of the woodland, they delight in a rich vegetable soil and half-shaded position. They may be planted amongst dwarf-growing plants, and the protection thus afforded prevents injury to the beautiful foliage during cold spring winds. We have them now growing with *Iris stylosa*. The latter was planted in a bed previously occupied with Erythroniums, some of the bulbs being overlooked when the bed was remade. The Erythroniums were noticed the following spring growing right in amongst the Iris, which gave them the necessary protection for the perfect development of their foliage."

HOW TO OBTAIN NEW FUCHSIAS.

It is fortunate for the sake of the beauty of our gardens that the Fuchsia is being restored to its former position as a flower for park and private domain. We were much interested in a few notes upon crossing Fuchsias to obtain new kinds contributed by the well-known specialist, Mr. James Lye, to the Hybrid Conference, held under the auspices of the Royal Horticultural Society last year, and the report now makes a volume of great interest and value. With permission we give Mr. Lye's remarks: "All the varieties of Fuchsias I have raised during the past thirty-four years have been from definite crosses, made with a view to improvement in habit of growth, freedom of bloom, and size and symmetry in the individual flowers. What I have kept steadily in view has

been the production of a variety with a pure white tube and sepals, in combination with a deep plum-purple corolla. I have been most successful in obtaining fine varieties when the act of cross-fertilisation was performed in the month of September. I generally make light-coloured varieties the seed-bearing parents, as they are more prolific seed-bearers, especially such varieties as Arabella, Arabella Improved, Lye's Favourite, Louisa Balfour, etc., and use the pollen of dark varieties. The plants to be operated upon for fertilisation are placed under cover, and all the openings through which air is admitted are covered with a fine netting or sheets of perforated metal, to prevent bees and other insects from entering the house and interfering with the work of impregnation. The pollen is mature within four or five days after the flower is fairly expanded, if the weather be favourable. The best time of the day to cross-fertilise is about noon, when the flowers and pollen are both dry. I make use of a camel's-hair brush to convey the pollen to the seed-bearing parent, and the two plants employed for the purpose are brought close together, so that none of the pollen be lost in the act of transmission. When I desire to obtain a quantity of seed, I

FERTILISE THE FLOWERS.

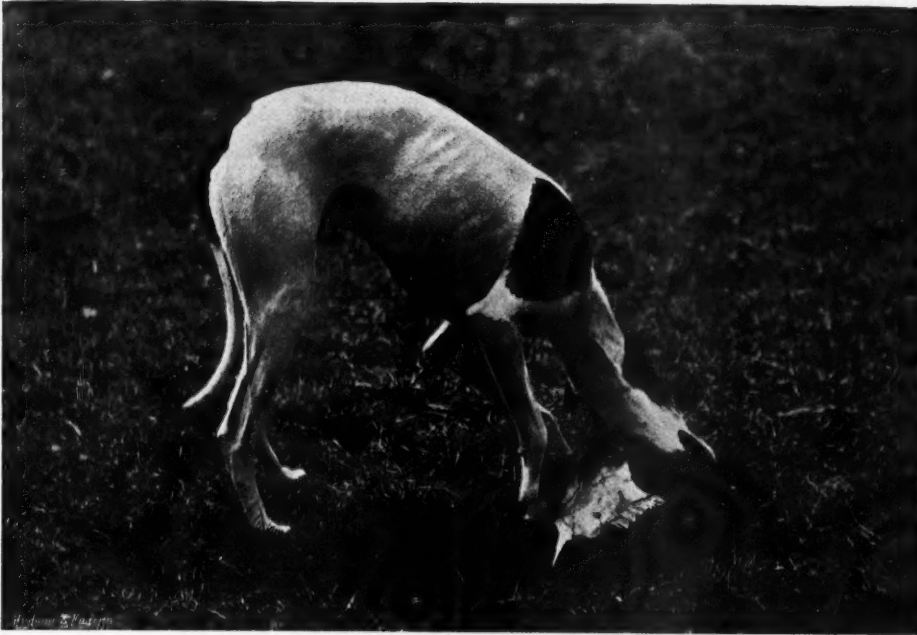
using the point of a squirrel's tail to convey the pollen from one to the other. Nothing of the character of a hard substance should be employed in the process, in case injury be done to the delicate stigmas of the flowers. When I have been unable to devote a house wholly to purposes of cross-fertilisation, and have had to keep the plants with others where there are open ventilators, the particular blossoms operated upon have been enclosed in light muslin bags, as they are preferable to those made of thin paper. If the sepals are extra long, they are often removed when the flower is covered. When the seed-pods are sufficiently ripe for gathering, they are carefully opened by means of a sharp penknife, the seed grains extracted and laid upon a piece of paper to dry, when they are placed in a box or some receptacle which is perfectly airtight, and then sown in early spring in a temperature of from 60deg. to 70deg. The first cross I attempted was by taking the pollen from a dark variety named James Lye, fertilising with it the light variety Arabella.



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THE GREYHOUND: YOUNG DOGS.

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From this I got encouraging results, Arabella Improved being among the progeny. I then crossed Arabella Improved with James Lye, which produced several very fine varieties, such as Charming, one of the most useful and popular decorative and exhibition varieties, Elegance and Bountiful, dark, Star of Wilts, Beauty of Wilts, Lye's Favourite, Letty Lye (which makes an excellent bedder), and other light varieties. I have also used as a seed parent Louisa Balfour—a light seedling of my own—and Mrs. Rundle also, crossing them with Charming and Wiltshire Giant, securing fine and distinct varieties, and also in the case of Jubilee, a fine light, crossed with the dark Masterpiece, and an exceedingly free light variety named Amy Lye with Clipper, also a dark variety. Masterpiece and Clipper are two valuable free-blooming varieties for conservatory decoration, of vigorous growth, and lasting a long time in bloom. I have never made use of double-corollaed varieties for fertilising purposes, and from all my crosses have had but two or three semi-doubles; one Wiltshire Giant I thought good enough to name, and also Snowdrop, the only seedling I have raised with a white corolla. It produces long globular buds, and when expanded a white petticoat-shaped corolla."

THE BEST APPLES FOR BRITAIN.

An interesting discussion has been pursued in the *Garden* about Apples, the outcome of an article advocating fruit culture in the British Isles as an industry "for our boys." Of course we know more about varieties and ways to treat them than we did a few years ago, but much ignorance still exists as to the most ordinary details of cultivation. Unless a man possesses a knowledge of the business he is about to follow it is unreasonable to expect success, or even competition in a small way with the splendid importations from over-seas. But we shall probably have more to write about the fruit-growing industry in England soon, so merely give the following list of Apples as approved of generally by the leading pomologists of the day. It is almost needless to say that no single list will prove suitable for every county in the British Isles. An Apple that bears abundantly every year in Scotland would not behave well in Devonshire, but this list is a very good one for a beginner to place faith in, finding out the kinds that are the greatest success in his particular district.

EARLY.—*Dessert*: Devonshire Quarrenden, Irish Peach, and Lady Sudeley. *Cooking*: Duchess of Oldenburg, Ecklinville Seedling, Golden Spire, Grenadier, Keswick Codlin, and Pott's Seedling.

MIDSEASON.—*Dessert*: American Mother, Cox's Orange Pippin, King of the Pippins, Ribston Pippin, and Worcester Pearmain (for market only). *Cooking*: Bismarck (particularly for market), Frogmore Prolific, Golden Noble, New Hawthornden, Stirling Castle, Waltham Abbey Seedling, and Warner's King.

LATE.—*Dessert*: Allen's Everlasting, Blenheim Orange, Brownlee's Russet, Claygate Pearmain, Cockle Pippin, Court pendu Plat, Duke of Devonshire, Mannington's Pearmain, and Sturmer Pippin. *Cooking*: Alfriston, Bramley's Seedling, Damelow's Seedling (popularly known as Wellington), Lane's Prince Albert, Newton Wonder, New Northern Greening, and Norfolk Leafing.

IRIS AND PINK.

The illustration represents two of the sweetest flowers of the early summer, the white fringed Pink and the blue Iris or Flag (*Iris germanica*). It is not usual to find the fringed Pink in modern gardens, as its place has been taken by more recent kinds, such as Her Majesty, Mrs. Sinkins, and others, which, however, although exceptionally free, fragrant, and strong in every way, are not more precious to the writer than the fine old garden fringed variety, or fimbriata. The time of the Pink and Iris is approaching, and it is wise to associate them as seen in the illustration, the Pink forming a fragrant groundwork to the noble Iris masses. Colour seems to pour from the big Iris flowers, and a sweet scent is distilled into the summer wind. Noble the plant is grouped in the border or in a large bed, or lining each side of some grass walk. An Iris walk is a beautiful creation, the flowers rising in profusion from the massive growths and making a sea of colour quite early in June or even late in May, when the whole garden should be perfumed and brightened with a hundred kinds of flowers. There are many varieties of the Flag Iris—the beautiful Dalmatian Flag (*Iris pallida dalmatica*), Queen of May, the early Florentine Iris, Victorine, Madame Chereau, and Blue King. The self colours are more effective than shaded flowers, unless the colours are very distinct, such as in Victorine, in which we get a bold contrast, the deep purple lower segments against quite

tinted upper segments, or standards, to use the botanists' language.

NEW GARDEN PLANTS.

The new plants described were each given an award of merit at the last meeting of the Royal Horticultural Society. We describe these regularly, as we think readers will be interested to know the flowers likely to become popular in the future. Orchids are omitted.

Azalea Duchess of Wellington.—This is one of the prettiest hybrids we have seen for years; it is so absolutely distinct from anything else amongst Azaleas, and may be compared to the "Ghent" class, the plant shown by Messrs. Cuthbert of Southgate, bearing a number of neat clusters, the flowers packed close together, and pale pink in colour, with deeper markings upon the upper petals.

Azalea Mrs. A. E. Endtz.—This is not so distinct as the foregoing; it is one of the deep orange or yellow-flowered class, of which Anthony Koster is a good type. The flowers of the new hybrid are very rich in colour, large, and almost hide the leafless shoots. It was shown by the same exhibitor.

Pyrus Malus angustifolius fl.-pl.—A beautiful tree, with flowers of rosette-like form, and about 2½ in. across, pale pink, deeper in the bud. It is, of course, difficult to appreciate the full beauty of the tree from a plant brought into bloom under glass, but the flowers are charming in colour and form, and a tree in bloom on the lawn must be a delightful picture in early May.

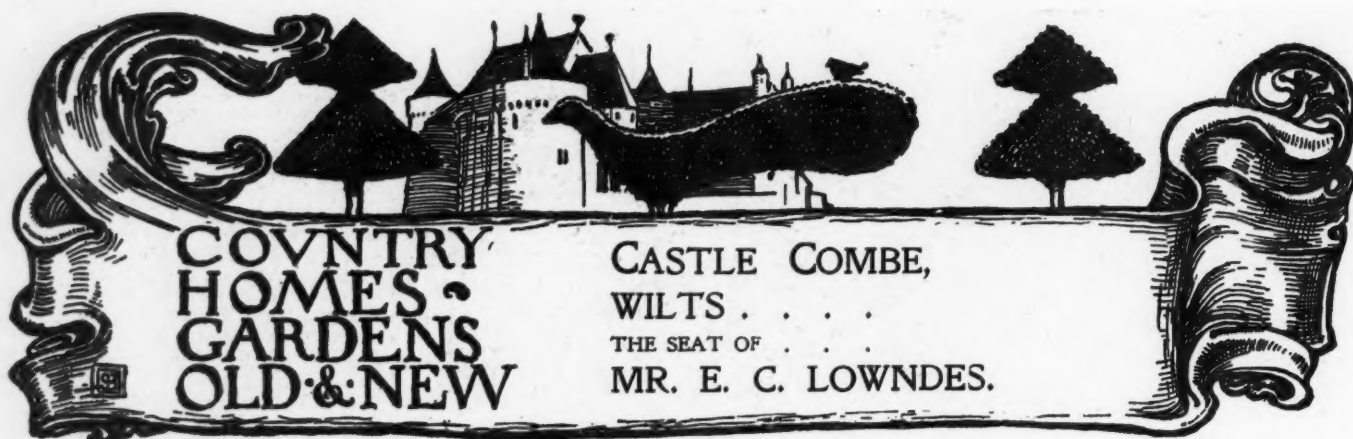
Rhododendron H. Elliott.—This is a hybrid with a Himalayan species as one of its parents. It is a beautiful flower, large, and purest white, relieved only by a suspicion of soft yellow on the upper segment. This is a plant well adapted for growing in pots in the greenhouse or conservatory, where the climate is too capricious for an outdoor life. Countess of Haddington is an excellent example of tender hybrid *Rhododendron* for pot culture. This hybrid was raised and shown by Messrs. H. and J. Elliott, Courtbushes' Nurseries, Hurstpierpoint.

Polemonium confertum variety Melitum.—This is a charming Jacob's ladder, one of those sturdy little plants so pleasing to see in the rock garden at this time of year. The leaves are quite pinnate and fresh green in colour, with clusters of soft yellow flowers, not white, as described in some journals and books. It is a delightful plant for the lower levels of the rock garden where there is no manure. A good deep, well-drained soil is suitable. This plant was shown by Messrs. G. Jackman and Son of Woking.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.—We are always pleased to assist our readers in matters of difficulty concerning the garden. We are also in touch with many first-class gardeners, and shall be happy to recommend one to any who may require the services of a reliable man.



A STUDY OF IRIS AND PINKS.



CASTLE COMBE is one of the most interesting of Wiltshire residences, and the beautiful gardens add to its charm and importance. Travelling from Chippenham towards Badminton, which lies about ten miles away to the north-west, many noble-tree groups and monarchs break in upon the landscape, but towards the end of the sixth mile the scene changes. A sign-post pointing to the left directs the visitor to the castle, and we leave the high road to pass through wooded banks and park-like slopes until a pretty village is reached, 200ft. lower than the highway from Chippenham. This village is yet 250ft. above sea-level, and at the bottom of one of those deep valleys or combes, which, beginning here to the east, intersect in all directions the southern declivities of the Cotswold Hills, extending westward with little interruption to the confines of the Bristol Channel and Severn.

One may well rest awhile in this quiet hamlet, which in the ages long ago possessed a market of its own. Many of the houses, with their mullioned windows and stone-tile roofs, date from the fifteenth century at least, whilst the old market cross at one end of the street and the three-arched bridge at the other are reminiscences of an interesting past.

The hills are crowned with woods, and the precipitous slopes, with a forest-like growth of trees and bushes, provide shelter and seclusion. It is a beautiful picture, this old English village in its setting of wooded slopes and leafy banks. Near the centre of the ridge is the church, a fine structure, remarkable for its splendid tower (1440), and many other historical features. The eastern gate of the churchyard opens upon the village street, but

a smaller gate at the western end leads directly into the pleasure grounds of the manor house.

The pleasure grounds are about twelve acres in extent, made up of shrubbery walks, shaded by lofty trees, a magnificent lawn of several acres, as level and velvety as a bowling green, and the exquisite hanging gardens for which this place is so justly famous. The gardens and terraces occupy the spur of a hill rising from above the roof of the manor house, from the eastern side of which it abruptly descends. The house itself, like all the houses here, is built of stone, with a roof of the same material, and may be described as an irregular but picturesque assemblage of gables, finials, turrets, chimneys, and mullioned windows surrounding in the rear three sides of a courtyard. It is of great antiquity, and though from time to time many alterations and additions have been made, these have been lovingly carried out to preserve its architectural character and beauty. It contains much old oak, a large collection of pictures and china, and a good library. Its east side, as we have already indicated, lies close under a hill, but the other sides look across the lawn; away to the north is the lovely village, and to the west the eye wanders across the stream to the steep hill opposite, whilst to the south is the grove of trees which conceals the village, the parsonage wood towering up beyond it.

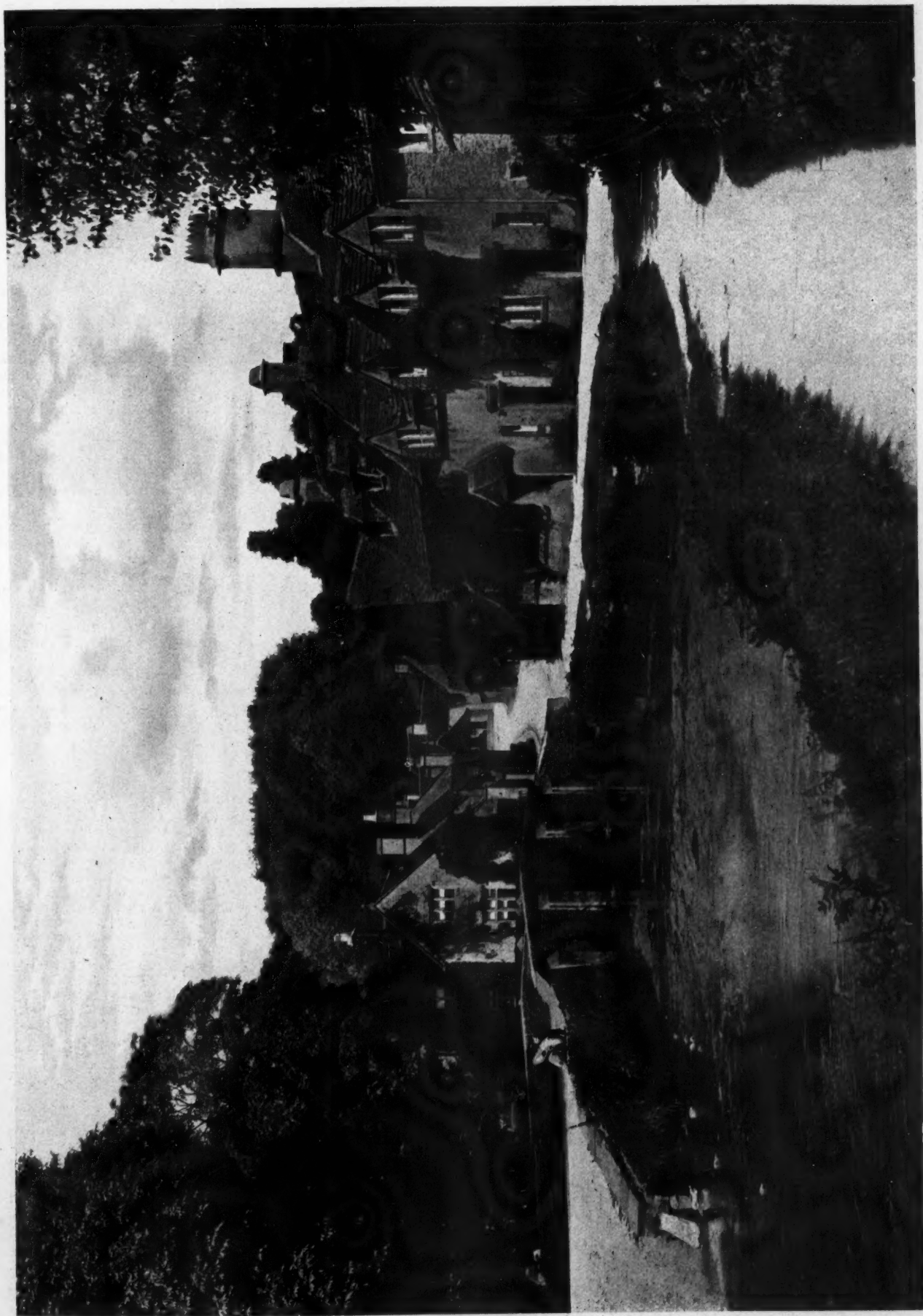
The river and a tributary moat separate the lawn from the deer park, which contains about 300 acres and a herd of 200 fallow deer. It comprises within its limits scenery of exquisite beauty, deep combes, precipitous slopes hidden with noble timber, and a growth of gnarled thorns, hazels, and aged maples.



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THE HOUSE FROM THE WOODS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



GARDENS OLD AND NEW.—CASTLE COMBE: A VIEW IN THE VILLAGE.

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THE HOUSE FROM THE NORTH.

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Fine stretches of tableland, 200ft. above the level of the valleys, form a wild and beautiful scene, whilst there is the added charm of two trout streams which enter the park in different directions, meet in the middle, and flow down in a united river past the manor house lawn and out into the village, eventually joining the river Avon a few miles above Bath.

On one of the hills in the deer park are the remains of the ancient castle from which the place takes its distinctive name of Castle Combe. It was built in this commanding position above

the reign of Henry I., but was dismantled two centuries later. Although this interesting spot is now a mere mound of rubbish and covered with a forest growth of many centuries, the dungeon which formed the base of the keep still exists, and the plan of the various courts or wards can be readily traced.

Outside the park proper, especially along the different valleys that mark the course of the streams, the ground preserves much of its forest-like character. It is a beautiful land of noble trees and woodland, and there are few fairer spots in this England



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FROM THE TERRACE STEPS.

"COUNTRY LIFE"

of ours than the village and manor house in their setting of woodland and park.

Looking from the door of the castle, which is in the middle of the south front, there is immediately opposite a circle of turf 50ft. or 60ft. in diameter. In the centre is a fountain with a circular stone basin, and leading up to the hanging gardens on the left is a splendid old stone staircase, flanked on either side with a balustrade and ramp and piers, each of which is surmounted by a flower vase.

Mounting this staircase and ascending still higher along terrace walks, we at length reach the Italian garden, a fan-shaped piece of ground, radiating at the top from a fern-house built of stone in the Gothic style, and measuring round its lower curve about 300ft. It is laid out in a symmetrical plan, with gravel walks, box edgings, smooth shaven turf, and flower beds, which in summer present a gay picture of colour. It is further adorned with stone staircases, tanks of water-lilies, balustrades, flower vases, pergolas, and a number of exquisitely kept clipped hedges and banks of evergreens. There are also several statues, including a fine replica in bronze of the Venus de Medici, presented to the owner by his neighbour Sir Algernon Neeld. The bell turret of a church at Biddlestone, now pulled down, has been re-erected here, and is figured by Pugin in one of his works.

Extending round the hill still further at either end of the Italian garden, as well as above and below it, are other gardens, a wilderness, and endless shrubbery walks, one of which leads towards a large kitchen garden half a mile away. In this garden are some fine holly hedges, and it contains also the old Chippenham butter market, pulled down some years ago, and re-erected here as a summer-house.

Mr. Lowndes, the owner of this beautiful property, has spent much of his leisure time adding to its attractions, and, besides improving the farm buildings and cottages, has constructed a complete circuit of drives some ten miles or more in length round the most picturesque parts of his estate, broad grass drives for the most part running through woods. He has also formed a large pinetum, occupying the side and bottom of a lovely combe, in which is one specimen of every known form of conifer that will grow here. The arrangement of the plants, those of each distinct genus being assembled together in one group, is, we believe, unique.

As Mr. Lowndes is unmarried, the heir to this fine property is the Right Hon. Sir John Gorst, the well-known politician, who holds the position of Vice-President of the Committee of Council in the present Administration.

We shall on some future occasion refer again to this

interesting garden—a garden of trees, shrubs, flowers, and conifers, and placed in the midst of scenery unsurpassed for its essentially English character and quiet charm.

BOOKS OF THE DAY.

"CAPTAIN SATAN" (Jarrold) is originally the work of Louis Gallet, and is translated from the French and therefore suffers in style. The translator says, in a preface, that he has tried in some cases to preserve the French idiom, and that is always a failure. However, it's not as bad as some translations. The story is that of the heir stolen in infancy by gipsies, his wicked brother, and a girl with whom the good one and the wicked one are both in love. "Captain Satan," one of the nicknames of Cyrano de Bergerac, is the *Deus ex machina*, and puts everything right. It is quite interesting, and I read it through at a sitting. Here is the exact story: Comte de Lembrat confides to Cyrano de Bergerac, when dying, that his supposed son is not his son at all. His wife is supposed after many years

not to be going to have a child, so he buys a poor man's child and pretends that it was his own. Five years after the Comtesse has a son, and then the Comte, for his own credit, has to pretend it is his second son. This boy is stolen at the same time as the gardener's boy, when quite little. The Comte leaves a confession and a will with Cyrano dividing everything between the real and the false son if the real son is ever found. Cyrano comes on the real son, and the book is taken up by various adventures with the false son trying to get possession of the documents and to kill Cyrano and get the real son out of the way. He makes one of the gipsies, Ben Joel, swear that the discovered youth is not the young Comte, is really the gardener's boy, and that the little aristocrat had died. Of course the true facts are in a book of records kept by the gipsies, and there is a lot of excitement about the getting hold of that book. In the end the false Comte dies by accidentally taking poison. The stolen one comes into his honours and marries the girl Gilberie de Paventines, who had been on the point of being forced into a marriage with the wicked one—all thanks to the gay philosopher, poet, swashbuckler Cyrano.

I approach my main theme of to-day with sincere pleasure. Mr. Morley Roberts

has never, to my knowledge, been in the same room with me, but mutual friends—the expression is incorrect, but it has the saving merit of convenience—have discoursed to me often concerning his geniality, his cleverness, his adventures. He has been Government official, ranchman, sailor man, starving man; he has picked up what the journalist calls local colour all the world over. So I opened "The Colossus," his first book, with high hopes. But they were dashed to the ground very soon. If this was Homer, then the occasion was one when Homer slept a little, and the worst of it was he had slept before he became Homer. Hence came it that I opened "The Plunderers," Mr. Roberts's second book, without any hope, with the astonishing result that it fascinated me. The best testimony to its merit that can be given is to confess frankly what happened. A tired man went to bed in a hotel with "The Plunderers" to soothe him to sleep. The electric light was in the wrong place for comfortable reading, but it would serve for turning over a few pages; and the tired man read, and read, and got up and remade his bed so that the light might be in the right place, and again he read, and read until there was no further need for electric light.

The whole idea of the book is brilliantly whimsical—some may think it to



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THE FOUNTAIN AND STEPS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

whimsical—and every page has the mark of high polish and of wonderful insight. The problem suggested to Dr. Sarle, who is the hero and not entirely unlike the late Sir Richard Burton in character, by Frazer, of the Foreign Office, is simply delightful. It is that he should organise a raid on Teheran, rob the Shah of his fabulous jewels, and that British diplomatists, after throwing out a gentle hint that the Russians are the offenders, shall gain credit and other things which Great Britain wants, by restoring the jewels. The Foreign Office, of course, cannot find the money, and is quite prepared to disavow the raiders, if necessary. So the following delicious advertisement is inserted in the *Times*:

"To Millionaires and Others.—Wanted a young and active millionaire, who has ideas above his station, and would like to do something in the big world beyond being made a fool of by women. For such a man, whose notions of space are not bounded by Park Lane on the west and Threadneedle Street on the east, an opportunity now offers of spending £100,000 or more on an unremunerative scheme, which is hardly likely to occur again, as its projectors will very probably be killed on the expedition. To anyone, however, who desires some months full of excitement and an international reputation, nothing could be more attractive. Apply for further details to Sarle, E 501, *Times* Office."

"It is rather neat," said the Albanian.

"Frazer says his man was awfully excited when he drew his attention to it," said the composer of the advertisement; "and Frazer pretended to dissuade him."

"And he rose at once?"

"He wrote at once, anyhow. And he's no fool, for he insisted on seeing my solicitor. I had to find one on purpose, and tell him all about my noble and disreputable self."

Bertrand laughed.

"With some reservations?"

"With none," said the doctor, "and I suppose my noble character must have been satisfactory. He got my erudite book on 'Natural Selection among Disease Germs,' and, at any rate, he's open to negotiate. If I've any gift of persuasion he's hooked. But I wouldn't miss him for worlds. Let's be going."

On the threshold of the crowded international room Sarle paused and looked back.

"Olla podrida, all sorts pudding, cosmopolitan hash, isn't it, Bertrand? Shall we ever come back to play Pawn to King's fourth?"

Sarle laughed.

"Turk in a high hat, outcast Albanian, with refugee from Stamboul, and dear friend of mine (I also being a ruffian), we are going, and don't omit to remember not to forget it. You shall see me hypnotise our millionaire in three minutes by Shrewsbury clock."

Frazer, the artful Frazer, brings the advertisement in a scoffing tone



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CASTLE COMBE: PICTURESQUE COTTAGES.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

under the notice of Singleton, a millionaire, because he knows that it is sure to attract him. So Singleton is introduced to Sarle, the born adventurer, and to Miss Cazenove, once a governess in Persia, whom the Shah had desired to marry, *inter alias*, and in the confidence of the Foreign Office, and to Osman, the fighting Albanian, and to Bent, the merchant sailor, who is to command the ship that has been bought and disguised as a tramp, and to the rest of them. And at their meeting Sarle sings a song of his own composition, which is as good as anything that Kipling ever wrote.

We will never come back any more,
Ohé, Ohé, Ohé!

For we go where the breakers roar,
Ohé!

Simple Simons may stay at home,
But you and I for ever must roam,
Ohé, Ohé!

Little indeed we hope to make!
Ohé, Ohé, Ohé!

But what care we for the ague shake,
And what for starvin' for no one's sake?
Ohé!

It's ours to cease not, ours to go,
Whether our mothers will let us or no,
Ohé, Ohé!

The Wallaby track or counting ties,
Ohé, Ohé, Ohé!
Under the brass of burning skies,
Ohé!

And what is ease or what is pay,
At the rate of enough for an hour of day,
When our feet must travel and will not stay,
Ohé, Ohé, Ohé!

My little plump folk, the road is rough,
Ohé, Ohé, Ohé!
By God, we're paid at the rate of enough,
Ohé!

When we sit in camp by the long lagoon,
And watch our goddess, the wandering Moon,
Ohé, Ohé!

The rate of enough for travelling men,
Ohé, Ohé, Ohé!
Is the rate of too much for nine in ten,
Ohé!

And he who returns has swallowed the nine,
He's ten times one like a big combine!
So stand from under, you lazy swine!
Ohé, Ohé, Ohé!

So the wild raid is started, and it succeeds. Space, or the absence of it, alone forbids me to linger as I should like to linger over every step in it, over Edith Cazenove's private resolve to be in Persia at the same time as her lover, the gathering of hordes of Kurds under Osman, the capture of Edith by the Shah, the wild ride into the city, the grim and great fight, the rescue of the Shah himself by a feminine trick of Edith, the rescue of Edith from the harem by Sarle, who carries



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CASTLE COMBE: A VILLAGE HOME.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

her into the house of the British Ambassador, where all the representatives of European Powers are gathered together for safety, and talks Russian as he does it. But I must not, and there is much more, and the whole is wonderful. It is robust, full-blooded, dashing, and full of insight; and the underlying idea of it, that money is "bottled energy," and, like the dynamite in the torpedo, that with enough of it and courage you can do anything, is splendid. So are the epigrams, but the number of them is so great that nobody would thank me for selecting a few.

"The Garden of Swords," by Max Pemberton (Cassell), bears no mark of being a reprint, but I feel that I have read it before. Perhaps it was a Christmas number of something. It is written in a lively, active style, which Max Pemberton can always use, but at the present time tales of battle and sudden death do not take one's fancy much, unless, like the previous book treated, they are of exceptional merit. Piping peace is the time for them. "A Garden of Swords" is a tale of the Franco-Prussian War. An English girl, whose mother was a Frenchwoman, marries a French lancer from the house of her French grandmother at Strasbourg, and when her husband has to leave her when war breaks out she is at Wörth, where she is an onlooker—from a distance—at the battle. Thence she is taken care of by an English friend serving in the German Army, who gets her through to Strasbourg, where she remains during the siege. The husband, Lefort, is taken prisoner at Wörth. Towards the end of the book he arrives at Strasbourg, where he has a row with his wife, owing to her friendship with the English-German. He then quarrels with the Englishman (Brandon North), is struck by a fragment of a shell, and dies in his wife's arms on the day Strasbourg is surrendering, acknowledging his egregious folly. Quite a lively story.

Swans at Abbotsbury.

AT the present moment all the 500 pairs of swans at Abbotsbury are selecting their nesting ground on the meadow at the head of the "Fleet." Lord Ilchester's wild gardens lie behind, and some of the nests are beside the grass

charm for the selfish and appreciative few. It may be approached by land or sea; in the former case, in a rickety trap from the nearest station; in the latter, by any of the little steamers that in summer ply from neighbouring seaside resorts of greater vogue and less beauty. Guided over acres of corks, that speak the hamlet's one industry—lobsters—the little craft that has till now been skirting a wall of frowning cliffs, punctuated at intervals by coastguard look-outs, glides of a sudden between two rocky headlands, unseen till they open before the bow, and crosses in thrice her own length a tiny natural harbour. Here is no pier, no mooring. The steamer simply runs her nose on the tiny strip of chalky beach, and her passengers, hugging (God forgive them) parcels of oranges and meat, disembark by a shaky plank and alight amid worn-out lobster pots, broken oars, and other insignia of the cove's stagnant glory.

Yet it is not on such visiting days that the spirit of the place can be caught. The magic that lies over it at sunrise on a May morning is rudely broken by these summering trippers with their provisions and their boisterous good-humour. To know the place as it really is one must stay there for a week at a stretch, catching pollack whenever it is fine, and lounging ashore in the single winding street whenever it is too breezy. There is not on the Channel coast a better perch for an evening pipe than on the greensward beside the trim revenue station that tops the beetling west cliff. The surrounding country invites occasional disloyalty to the monotonous waves, for it is typical of all that is best in English landscape. Not within six miles comes the snorting iron horse, and then only thrice daily either way.

On either side, east and west, are glowing resorts, but of



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NESTING SWANS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

paths among the clumps of pampas grass and fuchsias. But the favourite site for nests is on the meadow here shown, close to the side of the long lagoon. Though they do not fight for nesting-places like the swans on the Thames and Norfolk rivers, each bird holds strongly the view that a swan's nest is his castle. They will rush off and make a great display of striking anyone who comes near, though as long as the visitor will stand a few yards off they remain tranquil and composed. The figure kneeling in the foreground is that of Gregory Gill, the swan-keeper, who has just been round with a load of reeds, of which he shakes down a bundle near each nest for the birds to build with. To his left a little rill runs, taking fresh water into the head of the salt lagoon. It comes out on the opposite side of the picture, and all along it the swans are gathered, either in the act of drinking or of washing and cleaning their feathers, ablutions for which fresh water is far better suited than salt.

Sleepy Hollow.

IT is a secluded seaside nook, within four hours of town, yet far from the railroad and the madding crowd. Pity 'twere to name it and put a term to the calm restfulness of its surroundings, for once known to the many it would lose its

their ambitions, their piers and music, and luxurious, unremunerative hotels, my little retreat knows nothing. The prosperity of its few inhabitants is not measured by the freaks of tourists, though a few of these are gladly welcomed year after year, arriving as regularly, and exploited as carefully, as the harvest crops. No; their comfort depends rather on the goings and comings of visitors of darker livery. So long as the lobsters are well inshore all goes merry as a marriage bell. Every available pot is baited with every available offal, barring only the three exceptions proscribed by superstition—a cat, a donkey, and a raven. Otherwise, when the fishery is brisk, the weekly tub of fresh fish imported for the purpose from Grimsby is supplemented with anything and everything that once had its own life and beauty—hedgehogs, puffins, crows, dogs, and horses. Nominally, only those animals that have met with accidental death are so impounded, for economic purposes, though it is darkly whispered that the death rate of domestic poultry has been known to show a sudden increase on two occasions when there was bad weather on the East Coast and the Grimsby tub missed its week. Crabs are also of some importance during the three months of spring, but lobsters are the staple stand by, and very long faces are seen whenever they run short, or when those already captive in the moored store-boxes are so scared by Nature's artillery or by the practising cannon on Her Majesty's

war-ships stationed close by as to shoot their claws and otherwise damage themselves for market. Life is uneventful in this placid community, crime is unknown. The solitary constable—it is, after all, an allowance of one constable per street—leads a fatuous existence, wandering, hands in pockets, around the few cottages of whose placid inmates he has temporal charge, or staying his beat to drink with the idle visitor, and regale him with welcome fragments of local small talk. The “family” are back at the Castle; there has been further talk (*Dio ci guardi!*) of the railway; the brothers Cullick had a narrow escape from drowning in the storm a fortnight come Tuesday, and so forth. These wretched trifles, the return from town of some local county family one knows nothing of, the mooted desecration of that fair valley with all the horrors of railway enterprise, and a tumble from their cobbles of the two most prosperous and least sober brothers in the place, assume, amid the inanities of rest, all the importance of the world’s intelligence that arrives once a day from civilisation. Long of life are these wholesome country folk; singularly well-favoured, too, and, considering the inevitable intermarriages, shrewd withal. All, save the imported limb of the law and the coastguardsmen aforementioned, are of one blood, and even the sombre X99 and the gayer Bluejackets up on the hill often choose from the natives sweethearts and wives.

That the place should be regularly visited by only a chosen few, who year after year bespeak in advance every available shakedown, is not surprising. In the first place, those who know the place say little of its attractions to those who do not. In the second, those who have not a long-acquired love of the place, or who do not appreciate the delights of sea-fishing on a long ground-swell, with intervals of short chop, will find these same attractions somewhat nebulous. There is, thank goodness, neither band nor circulating library. There are no sands on which the children can paddle and deck their pyramids with fronds of seaweed. Indeed, to the admirers of the conventional watering-place, with its promenade and bands, and its hurried bathing from machines on wheels, this little village must grow insufferable in the course of the first twenty-four hours. They will find nothing of interest in the simple talk of the weather-beaten old fisher-folk. They and their cheap cameras will soon weary of the beautiful wave-worn arches and crumbling cliffs of chalk, tunnelled by a hundred thousand sea-birds that send up a deafening roar in greeting to any boat passing near the nursery ledges in early morning. They will find the aboriginals, with their aggressive honesty and their torn serge clothing and soft brogue, no more than savages.

Yet the place is delightful to the jaded townsman in search of bird-life, of rare ferns, of sea-fishing, and, above all, of health. It is a paradise to those who like their respite from the mill in some gentle spot sacred from the horrors of regattas, waggonettes, minstrels, and itinerant photographers. It has no foreshore for the crowd and those who cater for its amusement. Within the little bay the fifty punts of the lobster-men monopolise most of the strip of crescent beach. Without, the blue water washes to the very chalk, and the eggs and fledglings of sea-fowl fall in gusty weather straight into a watery grave.

It is reported that on one occasion the following conversation took place in court between an eminent and departed Master of

the Rolls, whose aspirates were of migratory tastes, and an official suffering from the same infirmity. The Clerk: “I have searched without success, my Lord, all through Ha, He, and Hi.” The Master, sublimely ignorant of the cause of an audible tittering in the body of the court: “I am not certain, Mr. —, but I fancy that you will find the reference if you look through Hell.”

And so, in like manner, I would advise those who seek the hidden identity of my little sanctuary on the South Coast, and who would there spend their next holiday, to go to L—.

F. G. AFLALO.

Famous Beech Trees.

“IF these woods were of other timber than beech,” said a learned judge in a case involving the right of a tenant for life to cut down timber on an estate, “they could not be felled. The lady”—it was a lady who was making the

application—“might enjoy this timber by sitting under its shadow. She might also depasture her swine there; but she could have no other use of it, except by taking the dead branches and dead trees for fuel for her hearth. But in this case the woods are beech, and it has been shown to my satisfaction that in the county where the estates are situated, viz., the county of Buckingham (which means the county of the bock, *booh* or beech), this timber is, and has been for a long period, grown as a crop, to be cut down every thirty years, for the purpose of making chairs, and that after that age it becomes less useful for that purpose, and its retention on the ground involves a waste.” And, in short, he gave the lady leave to cut down her beech trees.

Fortunately for our finest forest timber, all beech woods are not in Buckinghamshire, and the timber is not grown to make chairs only. The greater part of our largest timber trees in this country are now beech. Oak had a poor chance of surviving, owing to the enormous demand for shipbuilding at the end of the last century and the beginning of this. Beech, which is not suitable for shipbuilding, was spared. The result is that even in the New Forest, where there is more timber over 250

years old than in any area of ten times the size in the South of England, beech is the forest tree. There you may see them in absolute perfection, and of all the characteristic shapes—and there are many—of the mature tree. The main varieties are the pollards and the natural trees. The finest pollards in the forest are at Mark Ash, where each gigantic stem looks like, and is quite as large as, the thickest Norman pillars in Durham Cathedral. There the beeches, which cover very many acres, make incomparably the finest purely sylvan scene in this country. The tall beeches, unpollarded, are to be found in their greatest perfection on “Vinney Ridge,” about three miles from Lyndhurst. They are not, as a rule, single columns, but rise to a great height, and then divide into three or four stems. The tallest of these trees are about 110 ft. high. In them the forest heron breeds, choosing these with good judgment, for the greater number are absolutely unclimbable.

The tallest and best single-stemmed beech in England is that shown here. It stands in Lord Brownlow’s park at



J. T. Newman.

THE QUEEN BEECH.

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Ashridge, which overlooks the beech county, Buckinghamshire, and Lord Rothschild's park at Tring, but is itself on the opposite chalk range, on the borders of Hertfordshire. It is known as THE QUEEN BEECH, and is calculated to be 150ft. high. It is remarkable not only for its height, but for its perfect shape. The stem rises 100ft. without a single branch, and in the form of a perfect cylinder, growing very gradually less towards the top. Other beeches close by reach an equal height, but have not such perfect and symmetrical trunks. One of the finest "all round" beech trees in Scotland is at Newbattle Abbey in Midlothian. It is 95ft. high, and 37½ft. in girth 1ft. from the ground. The branches spread over a circuit of 350ft.

The uses of beech, whether for fuel, food, or timber, are manifold, and in some ways peculiar. Beech leaves make a fragrant, soft, and wholesome mattress. They never decay if kept dry, and have some antiseptic substance in them which prevents any vermin of the leaf-eating kind from harbouring in them. The charcoal burners of the New Forest sleep on sacks of beech leaves, and are as comfortable as need be. The oil of beech nuts is pure and good, quite as serviceable for cooking as salad oil. Then the nuts, as everyone knows, are the best of food for pigs and pigeons, and the wood makes the most beautiful fire in the world. Perhaps that is why it is the favourite wood for charcoal. But it is a pity to burn it otherwise than in the natural state. I have often noticed the beautifully clear, glowing



J. T. Newman.

A WOODLAND GLADE.

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fires which the gipsies make; they will burn half the night like those of good coal. These fires are always made of beech sticks when procurable.

The wood is particularly useful for any work which has to stand the effect of water. Nearly all the wheels of the water-mills were made of beech, as well as the plates of weirs, the posts of locks, and cam-shedding. In houses it is far less durable than oak, and is not much used for that reason. Yet it makes good and durable furniture, and is still in great demand for that purpose.

C. J. CORNISH.

Winter Travelling in the Klondyke.

"We are out once more on the old trail, the long trail."

—Kipling.

PERHAPS in the years to come travellers in the Yukon district, who are whirling to Dawson by the Arctic Limited Express, will recall the stories of the long 600-mile tramp behind dog sleighs over the ice, and there will be built around the memory of those days a halo of romance such as lingers still with the old coaching times; or the Lochinvar of a historical novel of the twenty-first century may distance all pursuit—with his lady love wrapped in furs on the sleigh before him—owing to the fleetness of his incomparable dog team and his own marvellous powers of endurance.



A KLONDYKER HAULING WOOD TO DAWSON.

In the stern reality of the journey romance seems out of the question, nor will the word even associate with the unspeakable discomfort of some of the road-houses on the trail. It is easier to imagine such a possibility as is suggested a few years ago, when those who made the winter trip could be counted on the fingers of two hands and road-houses were unknown.

The last good-byes have been said, the last letter for the outside handed to you, and you are jogging along behind the dog sleigh over the hard, well-beaten trail, to the accompaniment of the jingling sleigh bells, while the noisy farewells of your friends follow you through the clear, still air. Your dog team have been in hard work and are fit for the journey.

Having crossed the river, you turn and take a last look at Dawson, that "City of Dreadful Night"—what merry, mad revels have these long nights seen! Looking up the Klondyke river, a blue haze covers the valley, the smoke of the night-fires from the golden ground beyond, and Dawson, just awaking from sleep, is sending skyward its thousand wreaths of white smoke, which rise far into the still morning air before they spread and drift imperceptibly across the river.

The trail is excellent, you think, for its marble hardness has not yet told on sinew and foot sole, and the day promises to be one on which it is good to be alive; there is a blue, indescribably clear sky, not a breath of wind, and the thermometer 25deg. below zero. The hills to the east have become bathed in a generous, ruddy light, and presently the sun itself appears low over the hilltops, brilliant, but very dazzling to the eyes off the white snow.

At four o'clock you pull into a road-house, stiff, a trifle footsore, and eager for a meal and a bed—you are travelling

luxuriously, and buy your meals as you go instead of taking food and cooking yourself. After a fairly satisfactory supper, you are shown into another cabin, the bunk-house, 18ft. by 20ft. Ten men are trying to cook their meal on a camp stove; around three sides of the cabin are bunks (with poles for "mattress"), two tiers high, and the room is thick with tobacco smoke, burning bacon, and reeking dog-feed.

You finally get a chance to boil some water and mix your own dog-feed, though not without considerable difficulty, and a stern insistence on the rights of your "turn," for more travellers have arrived, and are clamorous for the use of the stove. At last you roll in your blanket on the pole "mattress," and try to forget your sore, smoke-irritated eyes in sleep, but belated travellers still arrive, and the little camp stove is kept red-hot till nearly midnight, and the cabin is at a temperature at which sleep is out of the question. An endless discussion goes on as to distances between various road-houses—how tired you will get of hearing this debated—and in one corner there is a heated argument between three men as to the relative merits of the dogs Royal and Siwash as leaders. The reeking tobacco smoke, the steaming dog-feed, the noisy exclamations and oaths of the last arrivals, the dust and bark which is shaken down on your face by a fellow-sufferer turning over in the bunk above you—all these combine to make you rise and go outside, swearing yourself a fool not to be camped in a thicket of pine trees, your roof the sky, ablaze with those brilliant, winking thousands of stars, and the swiftly moving mystery of the Northern Lights. It is cold, deadly cold though, and you cannot stay out long, unprepared as you are; as your hand is on the door to re-enter, a crackling report, followed by a muffled boom, tells you the mighty frost-king has fired his minute gun, and riven a long seam far out in the ice on the silent, motionless river. Returning to your bunk, you get a few hours' troubled sleep, and at 4 a.m. are

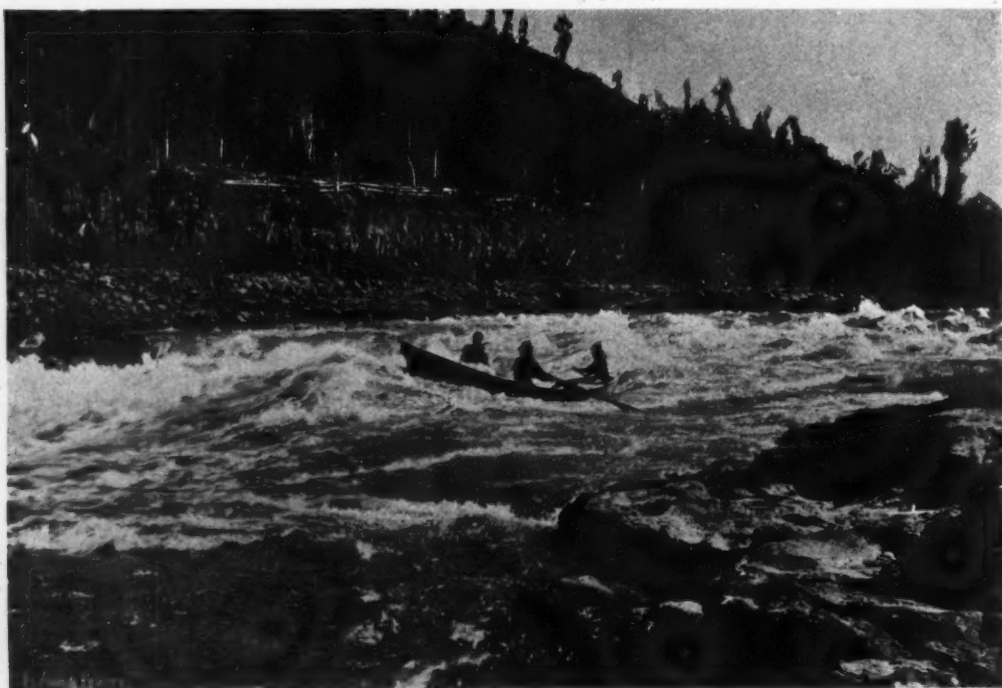
ice. The road-house to-night, however, is better, and a good night's sleep is worth a bank-note. The next day and the next are monotonously the same, only the food gets from bad to worse, till pork and beans are eaten off the same tin plate as bread and treacle; but your stiffness begins to wear off, your soreness to leave you, till you feel by the time you arrive in Fort Selkirk, 200 miles from Dawson, you can look forward with equanimity to whatever the 400 miles still before you may have in store. The little hotel at Fort Selkirk—my blessing on the hospitable



HUSKIES OF YUKON.

manager—is called the Savoy, and is to other road-houses you have been sleeping in even as its princely namesake on the banks of the Thames is to a country public-house. You astonish yourself—though not the excellent woman who ministers to your wants, for she has seen many such as you—by the largeness of your appetite, for do you not get soup, fish, meat, and pudding on separate hot and immaculately clean plates?—"a four-plate racket" I heard a Westerner describe the meal as—and presently you retire to sleep in a clean bed, on a clean spring mattress, and dream you are spending some of the millions—alas! dream millions only—you have made in the Klondyke within the luxurious walls of the other Savoy on the Thames Embankment.

The next day you push on, and meet, for a change, a howling wind and drifting snow, which stings the face like sand. The dogs toil on gallantly, but the drifted trail is heavy against the wind-storm, and you meet and look back enviously on three dog teams and six men who are blown past you into the dim mist of snow before you can catch your breath to ask "How far?" A short day's travel this one, which annoys you, so strong and tireless do you feel at the end of it. The wind dies down during the night; and next day—after a nightmare road-house, within even knottier poles than usual to sleep on, with more objectionable fellow-travellers than any you have so far encountered, and dirtier food than ever—you face the long trail again, in a temperature your thermometer tells you is 54deg. below zero; you therefore scrutinise each passing traveller, and stop perhaps and enquire if your own face is "touched" with frost. The sun has not much power yet against such intense



WHITE HORSE RAPIDS.

awakened by the smoke and smell of burning bacon being cooked—God save the mark!—by one of the early risers. You count heads before leaving this bunk-house, and find there were twenty-four who passed, it is to be hoped, a better night than you did within its dirty walls.

The next day's travel is torture; you are stiff, sore as though you had ridden a pulling horse over a big country after being out of the saddle a year, and the soles of your feet swell and burn as though the walking was on hot lava rather than

cold, and it seems as if the father of light, knowing this, tries to add to his strength, for three brilliant sun-dogs, small suns themselves, surround their parent. You know them to be the aftermath of the storm yesterday, but it is explained in a road-house that night that the sun-dogs "cause the cold," and the gentleman who makes this astonishing assertion snorts at your protest, and enquires how long you have been in the Yukon. "My first winter," you respond, weakly. "Huh!" he retorts, "an' you thinks you know better'n me about cold weather, eh? An' I've

bin in fifteen years!" "But the scientific——" you begin, gently. "Scientific be damned," he shouts. "Lots of them chaps aint never seen the thermometer below zero! Wot do they know of sun-dogs?" You return to your pole "mattress" without reply; you are too tired to give an elementary lecture on refraction.

Day after day you plod along, ever to the southward, and each day the sun is longer in the heavens, and warmer on your face. Sometimes the ice-road winds between bold, high banks, whose rocky scarps run down to the ice edge, sometimes between thickly-wooded islands, where the sombre pine trees throw their shadows far across the trail. Lake Lebarge is behind you now, and also the grim cañon and White Horse Rapids, where many a bold miner has found a grave in the rushing waters. You make in a day the sixty miles from Lake Tagish to the head of Lake Bennet, and wonder if you are the same foot-sore, stiff, and weary traveller who plodded along suffering in silence and misery sixteen days ago.

Your face is burnt a dark, rich brown, your feet are hard and tireless, you can sleep on a pile of firewood as soundly as on a spring mattress, you feel fit to run, jump, or fight for your life, and when next morning you top the summit of the coast range, bidding farewell for a while to the Union Jack floating there, and turn your face to the magnificent panorama spread below you, you know once more the *joie de vivre* you thought to be gone for ever with your schoolboy days, and you shout in the ecstasy of health which is found after toil and labour done in the keen bracing air on the long winter trail of the Yukon river.

HENRY TOKE MUNN.

ON THE GREEN.

HARRY VARDON continues to tour America triumphantly, a tour that would be more interesting if the triumphs were not so uninterrupted. The professionals seem more consistent in their play than the amateurs. When a man in their class has climbed to the top of the tree he not only stays there for a year or two—*vide* Taylor and Vardon—but while there he seems as if he were there of right, and beats any that comes to challenge him. Of course,

this is more true of Vardon than of any other golfer that ever handled a club; but as compared with the amateur golf it is characteristic of the golf of the professional class. Just at the moment in the amateur ranks we are being threatened with a real revolution of the younger element. We have seen it surging for awhile back, now it is breaking the surface, and it only remains to see whether it will go to the height of winning the championship of the amateurs. That is a matter that still lies on the knees of the gods; but there are several instances of the revolt of the juveniles that are historical, although recent. Mr. Bramston's beatings of Mr. Hutchinson, Mr. Hilton, and Mr. J. L. Low successfully are rampant cases at Westward Ho. At Muirfield Mr. T. M. Hunter won in a field that included two amateur champions, Mr. J. E. Laidlay and Mr. Balfour Melville; and another of the younger division, Mr. C. L. Dalziel, was second to Mr. Hunter. Again, there was Mr. R. Maxwell winning at North Berwick in the Tantallon Club's competition, and winning by an immense balance, with Mr. J. E. Laidlay again far behind; and at Hoylake Mr. J. Graham took the first day's medal by ever so many strokes from Mr. Hilton and Mr. Hutchings, who tied for second place. Are there other cases of the same revolutionary upheavals? Probably, but for the moment we forget them. Enough has been said to show that we are on the eve of a general upsetting of the ancient apple-cart, even if that antique vehicle is not already mouldering with the dry rot. Still, these older players have a way of reasserting themselves, of "bobbing up" again in what has been called the Indian summer of their game. They are not likely to allow themselves to be fossilised, neatly ticketed, and laid on the shelf as specimens of what was good in a bygone age, without some effort.

It is said by people who visit a good many golf clubs that the lists for the Tait Memorial Fund are not filling up according to hope and anticipation. Of course the general fact of the drain on people's pockets owing to the war and so on are to be kept in remembrance; but is it not likely to be the case in regard to this particular subscription list that a good many of the men whose names might have been looked for on a certain list are absent because they appear on some other list? Most men are members of several clubs. The lists are put up in all; but the subscriber only writes down his name on one, and hence the many blank spaces. That is our suggestion by way of explanation, but we must also admit that we have always thought these lists would have filled far quicker had the object to which the money would be appropriated been named at first.

They have set the record for the competition score at Hoylake at a mighty low level now, Mr. Hilton, on the second medal day, getting round in the wonderfully low score of 72, wherein actually was a six at the last hole after he had reached the green comfortably in two—a potential 70. It is a score to make one marvel, only to be made by perfect play with all that kind fortune can do to aid it helping.



AT THE THEATRE

MR. R. C. CARTON has achieved another success. All his successes are those of merit, in their several ways. Of late, this, one of our most able and charming writers, has been pessimistic and decadent in his themes, but in "Lady Hunt-

worth's Experiment," at the Criterion Theatre, without going back to the idealism of "Liberty Hall" and "Sunlight and Shadow," he once again expresses his belief in human nature in a play in which there is nothing to hurt, or nothing which hurts. It is a triumphant vindication of the attitude of those who hold that it is possible to amuse and interest an audience of adults without banning the theatre to adolescence.

When a writer can give us so pleasant and wholesome a play as this, and can give it the treatment of charm, of literature, of character which Mr. Carton can always give, success is certain. Certain, though the "plot" is "thin." Plays with plots must always be the very best things for the theatre, but, when one gets a comedy of character so admirably told, so unremittingly interesting, we may fervently welcome it. The groundwork of "Lady Huntworth's Experiment" is fantastic, not too convincing—theatrical, if you will. But though the situation in which the people of the drama are placed is all these, the characters themselves are human and true to life. So we regard the play through them, and the result is very pleasing indeed.

Lady Huntworth has allowed herself to be divorced by her husband, has not defended the suit, because she preferred to bear the stigma rather than continue the wife of a horrible drunkard, who has spent her fortune and ruined her life. Penniless, under an assumed name, she becomes the cook of a country vicarage.

Everyone falls in love with her—the choleric old vicar, the horsey, good-hearted military man, the butler. All on one night they make their way into her kitchen. On the same evening her wretched ex-husband returns with an offer of remarriage, very kindly promising to "forget and forgive." He has heard that she is the heiress to another fortune. For a little while the comedy borders on farce, for each of the men has to be hidden in a room or cupboard; but Mr. Carton's skill enables him to avoid the pitfalls of such an embroglio, and he carries his piece triumphantly to a close.

The play is very admirably interpreted. Miss Compton, as the aristocratic cook, acts with her accustomed urbanity and cool, highly-bred manner; but, as usual, she manages to suggest a good deal of feeling, nevertheless. Mr. Eric Lewis provides another of his little gems of character study as the vicar, Mr. Arthur Bouchier with another of his rough, breezy, pleasant gentlemen of the Army. Mr. Ernest Hendrie's drily humorous style obtains an excellent outlet as the butler; Miss Pollie Emery makes one of the successes of the evening as a typical "slavey." Miss Gertrude Elliott, in too small a part, is as charming and winsome as ever. Mr. Dion Boucicault gives a gruesome and ugly, but very striking and clever, performance of the character of the villainous Huntworth; the author must share with the actor the blame for laying on the colour too thickly for a play of such delicate texture.

"MARSAC OF GASCONY" is romantic costume drama run mad. A burlesque of "The Three Musketeers" fashion could hardly further go. Mr. Edward Vroom's play, produced at Drury Lane Theatre, is a mere



collection of exaggerated incidents, held together by nothing more than lengths of the most high-flown dialogue. Every time the hero comes on the stage he disposes of half-a-dozen opponents by the strength of his good right arm; that these opponents turn up smiling again in the next scene is not so much against the prowess of the hero as against the sense of humour of the author.

It is a little difficult to tell what "Marsac of Gascony" is all about. There is a young gentleman of title but no fortune who intends to go from his ancestral halls to take service under Cardinal Richelieu. There are a party of conspirators against the life of Richelieu who come to Marsac's château and there conspire. By stealing Marsac's papers and giving them to somebody else they cause Marsac completely to lose his identity, even though he is in his own house and among his own neighbours. Marsac is thereupon dubbed an impostor, and a party of strolling players happening to hie them hither, he joins them and goes a-touring. He immediately falls in love with the beautiful and virtuous "leading lady" of the troupe, who has also attracted

career of everybody, arrange for the assassination of Richelieu—merely that!—and are, of course, left carelessly about by the villains in order that everything may come right in time for the final fall of the curtain. It is all a little humorous and more than a little antiquated. "Marsac of Gascony" has no central idea; it has no theme; it is only a collection of incidents loosely strung together; and even these incidents are not particularly dramatic or even interesting.

Mr. Vroom, an American author and actor, himself played the hero of his piece. He acts breezily, and has something of the "grand air," he looks well and has plenty of spirit. But his voice, in its more robust moments, is not well under control. Miss Eva Moore, the heroine, is of course as sweet and dainty as possible; she did everything that was possible with the character, but even she could not make it in the least real or affecting. Poor Mr. Fulton, poor Mr. Cross, poor Mr. Emney, and the rest were in even worse plight. Mr. Fuller Mellish, as one of the villains who had nothing else to do than seat himself on the side of the stage and brood moodily; Mr. O'Neill as a deadly swordsman with an invincible "secret thrust" which did not "come off" with the invulnerable hero, had our deepest sympathy. Mr. Arthur Collins has mounted the play most handsomely, the stage pictures being effective, animated, and beautiful.

INTEREST and curiosity were very keen about the successor of "The Belle of New York" at the Shaftesbury Theatre. "An American Beauty," by the same author and composer, and produced by Mr. Lederer, the same American manager, came to us under the rosiest auspices; we were all prepared to give it the heartiest of welcomes. But we were doomed to disappointment. At first everything went well; it seemed, at the end of the first act, that we were to have a great success in "The Belle's" successor. But after that, in the often fatal second act, the show went to pieces, developed into the merest music-hall buffoonery, became wearisome, attenuated, ineffective in music, story, even in the mere incidental "turns" which often take the place of plot and story in these concoctions.

Never was a good beginning frittered away so aimlessly, never were the talents of clever people utilised with so little effect. The actors and actresses who had shown such ability, such individuality, such resource in the first half of the entertainment, afterwards had nothing to do that was not silly and often incomprehensible. The weakness and incoherence of the story, noticeable from the first, drifted into imbecility; of construction, of a crescendo movement, there was none. Except for a meaningless moment, the hero and heroine, the lovers, had not met until the middle of the second act. He had come on and she had gone off; she had entered and he had made his exit. When the time came that the author could no longer resist the necessity for taking up the interest

which should have dominated his story, he could find nothing better than the stupides intrigue which placed his hero in a contemptible light.

Even all this would not have mattered had there been brightness and scope for the cleverness of the company, who had become such favourites in the first act. Miss Edna May had delighted, yes, and surprised, us by showing herself the possessor of talents she was not able to display in "The Belle of New York," a vivacity, a sense of sentiment, a quiet effectiveness most pleasing; had sung very sweetly and looked as pretty as a picture. Miss Ella Snyder, another favourite returned, had been bubbling over with high spirits and doing all sorts of clever things. These, with a host of clever new-comers, promised an evening's excellent amusement. Mr. Richard Carle had proved himself a comedian with a fresh and easy vein of humour, a quaint manner, and a spontaneous method; Miss Marie George had danced and sung her way into the favour of her audience; Miss Truly Shattuck, Miss Eva Kelly had attracted



J. Caswall Smith.

MISS SYBIL CARLISLE.

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the villain of the piece, who swears that he must and will possess her. Marsac, with his trusty blade, puts hordes of ruffians to rout, escapes from prison, knocks his guards down like ninepins, saves the lovely Louise, severely wounds his dishonourable rival, rushes to the house of the noble Duke of Beaufort, the father of the villain, who—*mirabile dictu*—proves to be the father of Louise, his long-lost daughter stolen at her birth. So that the villain, you see, has been pursuing with his odious attentions his own half-sister.

Other idiosyncrasies of the play are the curious conduct of the hat of our gallant hero—it never leaves his head under any circumstances, including the toasting of his king or the kissing of the hand of his lady-love; the mysterious song, heard "without" at least once during each act, recalling vague memories to someone or other who happens to hear it; some quaint examples of the American language which we learned for the first time were spoken at the Court of King Louis XIII. of France; and some all-embracing "papers," which govern the

and pleased; Mr. Nicholas Long had proved himself a humourist with a most unusual sense of character and artistic insight; Mr. Albert Parr had sung very pleasantly.

Thus, to the end of the first act. After that—nothingness. Illegitimate and nondescript “varieties,” an absence of sense, melody, humour. Mr. Morton, the author, had only offered us mediocrity in story, and something less than mediocrity in dialogue and versification from the start, but he had amused. Mr. Kerker had given us several catchy numbers—one very pretty one, “Baby”—and a capital finale. But in the second act they offered us naught.

And yet it is hard to believe that “An American Beauty” cannot be turned into a success, with so clever a company, such brilliant dresses, and such a charming scene as that of the conservatory. It must be possible, but the effort will have to be very thorough, very comprehensive, and very sustained.

“KITTY GREY” at the Vaudeville is a very ordinary farce of the pattern we all know. It is just like half-a-dozen other translations from the French we have seen before, with the roving husband, the fascinating dancer, and the rest of it, including, this time, a flighty monarch. Mr. Piggott has turned the Palais Royale farce of “Les Fédards” into a Vaudeville imitation, and the effort, while not unamusing, is not very brilliant. The delightful acting of Miss Ellis Jeffreys sometimes gave us moments of real artistic pleasure, and Miss Miriam Clements lent it an attraction, too.

Miss Sybil Carlisle, who played so charmingly recently in “The Bugle Call” at the Haymarket, is one of the daintiest of our *ingénues*, and her appearance is always welcomed by a public which likes nothing better than brightness and prettiness on the stage when they are allied to intelligence, as in the case of Miss Carlisle.

PHEBUS.



THE question of the height of ponies seems likely to create a division among polo men. For some time there has been a very strong feeling that the existing rules of measurement are evaded successfully. The means of evasion by which ponies over 14h. 2in. are enabled to pass the official measurer are cruel and unfair. They are cruel, because ponies are drugged, starved, and have their feet pared down almost to the quick. Some animals are thus lamed or spoiled altogether. It is not fair to pass a big pony, because the object is to enable a player to ride a pony of 14h. 3in., or even 15h., against the smaller animals of other players.

This is believed to be an advantage, and though I am by no means sure that it is one, yet the desire to evade the clear wording of the rule, which says that “The height of ponies shall be 14h. 2in.,” is not fair play, and so to be condemned by all polo men. The complaints have been widely spread, and the manager of Hurlingham, Captain Egerton Green, admitted in a speech at a public dinner that the practices did exist. But the Hurlingham Polo Committee will not move. They have, indeed, always acted on the principle that it was their business to make rules, but not to enforce the observance of them. Then the matter was taken up by the Polo Pony Society, a body which includes in its councils breeders and judges of position and standing, such as Sir Walter Gilbey, Lord Arthur Cecil, Mr. John Hall, Mr. Bassett of Watermouth, Mr. Morris Underwood, Mr. John Barker, and the president, Sir Richard Green-Price. There are, too, several well-known polo players, Mr. Walter Jones, Count de Madrie, and Mr. Tresham Gilbey. The council thus composed looked into the matter, and deciding there was need of reform drew up some very practical suggestions, and forwarded them to the polo committee of the Hurlingham Club. That body, however, refused to listen to anything of the kind, and returned a curt refusal, in which they ventured on the assertion that all polo players were thoroughly satisfied. It is to be hoped the Hurlingham Committee will turn things over in their minds and come to a wiser disposition. Although no doubt as the game grows, a representative central body similar to the Indian Polo Association will become necessary, no one wishes to bring that day nearer. The Hurlingham Club have done great service, and we owe to them the present code of rules of the game, but they must recollect that they are bound by the positions which they hold to courtesy, and as far as possible to reasonableness. Their reply was neither courteous nor reasonable, and, of course, will not settle the matter as an amicable discussion of the various views might have done. The practices alleged must for the credit of polo players be either disproved or prevented. It is certainly the duty of the Hurlingham Polo Committee to enquire into the matter. To refuse to do so is to abdicate their position.

There was a pleasant though small gathering of those interested in polo and pony breeding at the Crystal Palace last Saturday. The occasion was the annual pony show and sale promoted by the London Polo Club. There was a good show of ponies, and some famous animals were exhibited. Sir Robert Wilmot and Mr. Dale undertook the heavy-weight classes. In the class for made ponies the first prize went to Mabel, a lengthy bay mare, which pleased the judges very much when they rode her. She was undoubtedly a pleasant ride, but sprawled about a little when turned and twisted. The grass was, however, rather slippery. On the whole, I liked the second prize winner, the chestnut Argentine Biograph, better. I have seldom seen a better shoulder and forehead on a pony. One of the judges told me that the third prize pony, Shandon (also an Argentine) was as good a polo pony as he had ever been on. He lacked the quality of the others, however, and it is blood that carries weight successfully in modern polo. A blood one with good limbs and level well-balanced shape will carry 14st. for the ten minutes which is all a pony is asked to do at one time. The novice class brought out a pony bred for polo, Game Chicken, by Steeton Pride out of

Oh My. This pony was a most charming ride, and it was evident he had won the judge's heart from the first. This pony's stable companion, St. Moritz, won also in the light-weight novice class. Both here and at Tolington the tournament pony class was judged by Captain Renton and Mr. Dale. Some first-rate ponies were shown, including such celebrities as Fizzer and Policy (the top price at Messrs. Miller's 1899 sale). The prize, however, went to the lengthy chestnut, Daylight, which stopped and turned as well as any of them and looked like a flyer. Policy was above herself, and did not give a good show, but she is a beautiful pony, with quality and power combined. Fizzer is too well known to need description.

Dandelion, a fine-shaped grey belonging to Lord Kensington, was placed first in the light-weight classes, and sold to the Maharaja of Cooh Behar, who was present. I would suggest that at polo shows ponies should always be tested with stick and ball, and that either a jumping competition or a polo gymkhana should be instituted to swell the gate and attract the general public. Major F. Herbert, however, managed the show well, and as far as the exhibits were concerned brought off an entire success.

I was sorry to hear that Eden Park, a club which has also been closely connected with soldiers' polo, do not intend to play this year on account of the war. The Catterick Bridge Club, which is noted for its excellent ground, will not open till July 1st.

On the other hand, Liverpool look forward to a good season, and Stansted is playing in spite of the number of members away in South Africa. Mr. E. D. Miller is on Colonel Mahan's staff, and is well and doing good work. We shall miss the soundest of our polo players at Ranelagh this season. I have always said that Mr. Miller would cause a larger blank in polo circles than many who might be considered better players. He is a tower of strength to any side, no man since Mr. John Watson gave up tournament polo has been so good a captain.

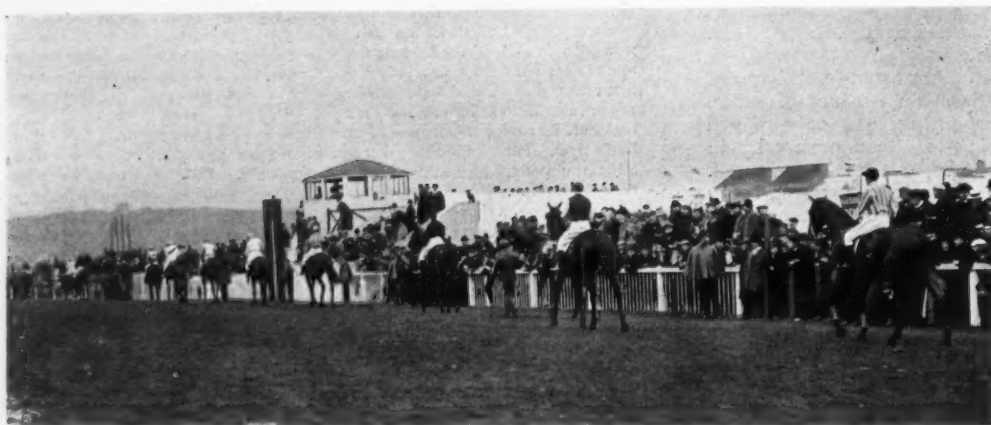
Naturally at the beginning of the season ponies are the chief interest in the polo world. It is doubly satisfactory to know that the supply is fairly good and the quality excellent. But ponies show no great tendency to drop in price, everyone being well aware that polo ponies will fetch big prices after the war is over. There will, I expect, be the usual inter-regimental tournament at Hurlingham after all this year.

The interesting picture of polo at Ranelagh exhibited at Carter's Gallery in Jermyn Street last year has been sold to Mr. F. Mackey, the American millionaire, but the picture has been successfully engraved. Of those whose portraits are in the picture, Lord Ava, Mr. W. T. Drybrough, and Captain Cortlandt-Mackenzie have passed away. Captain Kenneth Maclaren is a prisoner and wounded. Others more fortunate, like Colonel Le Gallais and Major Rimington, are in a fair way to make a name for themselves in war, as in the mimic fields of Hurlingham and Ranelagh.

WITH BUCK AND OTTER IN HANTS.

TO gallop for fifty-five minutes with buckhounds and run for five hours with otter-hounds is a good chronicle of sport for one week. The New Forest Buckhounds supplied the one sport, and Mr. Courtenay Tracy the other. Fritham village is but a hamlet, but on the green are splendid trees, and no prettier place for a meet could be found. Four trusty tufters are drawn from the pack, and the Master and the huntsman, with certain members of the field who thoroughly understand the sport, apply themselves to the task of separating a fine buck from a small herd of a score or more which the Royal Foresters say are lying out in the open. The foresters are good at harbouring, and the herd, with a fine buck among them, are lying where they are said to be. It does not take very long to separate the buck and to make the tufters settle to his line. Of course he makes straight for the woods, and clings to the coverts much longer than would be supposed possible on so hot a day. The theory of luck-hunting is that on a hot day galloping about the woods soon beats the deer, and that knowing this the buck takes to the open and tries to escape his pursuers by speed. In practice they appear to me to hang to the woods quite as much as a fox. The reason, no doubt, is that buck or stag which have been hunted before always wish to find a substitute. Therefore they beat about the familiar ground as long as possible, until they are actually forced away. Moreover, not seldom, as I said last week, the tactics succeed, and the old buck escapes, leaving to younger legs the necessity of flight. But even the most determined buck must go away at last, and once he was driven well into the open the tufters were stopped and the pack laid on. Then chiefly over open heather we galloped, trotted, and cantered for nearly an hour, till the burst of hound music in the woods told us of a doe on foot. Whether the buck lay down, or whether, as I think, he beat up the water, I cannot tell exactly, but this I know, that we never touched him again, and had, at last, to trot home with nothing done. Very different to the Thursday before, when, after running hard, hounds lost their deer, refound him by a lucky chance, and killed him. A hard-driven buck has many shifts, and one is to run with a small herd of does. But if a well-hunted buck does this and hounds press hard on the herd, the does, fresh and unhunted, soon leave the hapless buck to his fate. Hounds are sometimes stopped under the idea that they were after does only, and the Luck has escaped in this way.

There is a good deal of difference between walking and riding, and though the present writer has no love for pedestrian exercise, nevertheless otter-hounds never fail to lead him on. It is, indeed, impossible to resist the rich melody of their tongues as they go echoing up the valley of some lovely Hampshire trout stream. Very likely they are only hunting the drag of an otter that has gone hours before, and which either may not be in the water at all or have taken refuge in a part of the stream in which, at this time of the year at least, there is too much water. An otter escaped us thus last week. About a mile and a quarter above Botley Mill we dragged up to him. Then he was viewed down stream, the hounds for some time swimming down and throwing their tongues. But the river as it ran bore the scent away, and the pack had to land, and could only speak now and again to the line. This led us to the wide mill-pond, and we could not hunt here unless the millers would let off the water. This they could not do, for it is here a very big business, and can only be done at intervals. It would perhaps be a good thing for hounds to come at the time when the water is off. So the otter, only a small one, by the way, was left, and we went up the stream, which is the upper reach of the Hamble. Otters are pretty plentiful hereabouts, or were; but it is by no means certain because hounds ran a drag



W. A. Rouch.

THE GRAFTER AND GOBLET PARADE LAST.

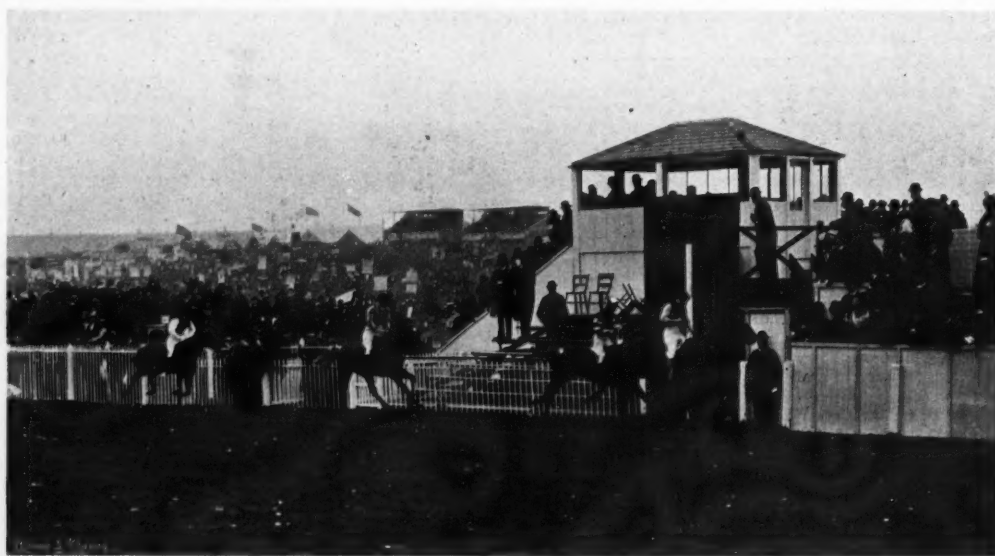
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at times warm enough that the otter is on the stream. But it was a lovely day, and hounds hunted well, picking the line out (the new hounds from the late Mr. Wilkinson's pack doing well), and all the time sounded that deep-toned chorus only to be heard with otter-hounds. The further we went the prettier grew the scenery, and listening to the hounds we went on and on. Would anything else lead one to walk and run for five hours? I think not; but it is good for mind and body, and if there be any wearied brain-worker who is in want of rest, and not too much afraid of rheumatism, let him hunt the otter. Mr. Tracy's hounds are not badly situated, even for the Londoner; the express train will take him to Salisbury one night and back the next. A day can be spent in the midst of lovely river scenery, open to no one except the angler. A small subscription (this is necessary) will make him free of the hunt, and health, happiness, and a renewed power of work will be the result. Once a man has gone otter-hunting he is sure to go again. X.

RACING NOTES

THE victory of King's Messenger in the Great Metropolitan was, as my readers know, expected and foretold by me a fortnight ago. The defeat of Manners in the Century Stakes at Sandown, taken in connection with the winning of King's Messenger, shows exactly how it is possible to estimate the chances of a horse not seen out for some time, which may or may not have retained or returned to his earlier form. If a horse has wintered well and been fairly tried and is in good work it is not enough; we need also to see him in public. Private trials may be satisfactory to owners and trainers, but the mere information that a particular

horse has or has not come out well in a test at home does not tell much to the man who is not aware of the circumstances of the trial, the weights carried, and the condition of the competitors. Even trainers of experience are not infrequently deceived by home trials, how much more those who only know of the result through the newspapers or from the still more untrustworthy sources of the gossip of racing. The sharper a turfite is reputed, or thinks himself to be, the more credulous, unreasonable, and superstitious he generally is. Moreover, much so-called information, except within a very small circle, is so coloured and exaggerated by the prejudices or interest of those who give it that it is worth very little. The ordinary sportsman who loves racing for its own sake will learn most by carefully watching the work of the horses, noting the results of racing, and particularly the form in which horses win their races or lose them, and last, but not least, by watching the market. These market movements are never to be disregarded, and often give the key to the real opinion of those most interested in the horse. It is true, of course, that the nominal favourite is not always the animal that carries the greatest weight of money in reality. Yet the man who goes racing



W. A. Rouch.

CITY AND SUBURBAN—THE FINISH.

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regularly and keeps his eyes and ears open should be able to form a correct opinion on these points. But apart, of course, from those who are simply gamblers, the real interest of racing is in watching the horses, studying and deducing inferences from their pedigrees, and forming our opinions on these data. We shall often be wrong no doubt, but we shall not seldom be right, and, perhaps, oftener than the seeker after tips and information, or than the men who appear to have far better sources of information than are open to us. The lessons of past racing must not be lost on us, and the result of our observations should be recorded on the tablets of memory. To my mind, one of the most interesting parts of a day's racing is the paddock inspection, and he must be indeed a dull learner who cannot gain some knowledge of condition and of the prospects of a particular horse on a given day when he has previously seen the same horse perhaps a dozen times before.

That which I expected about Downham came true in the City and Suburban, and the horse not only did not run well, but appeared in blinkers. Martin's whip has a good deal to answer for, and I shall watch the career of the youngsters, and particularly of the fillies he has ridden, with interest. Two year olds can do with very little whip, and fillies are more easy to spoil with rough treatment than their brothers. American jockeys win races because they are judges of pace, and because they let horses run their races right out, but they are not good horsemen, and the pleasure of racing is distinctly lessened by their introduction to English race-courses. I still believe in horsemanship, and



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THE WINNER OF THE CITY AND SUBURBAN.

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CENTURY STAKES—BONIFACE LEADS.

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think that when our jockeys have learned from the Americans what they have to teach they will generally beat them. Moreover, it must not be forgotten that when a jockey becomes the fashion he naturally has more than his share of likely mounts, and thus wins more credit as well as races than he is quite entitled to on his merits.

So far, I am not particularly in love with the starting-gate in itself, though I am bound to say that the very prospect of it has improved the behaviour of jockeys at the post, and diminished the weary waiting to a considerable extent.

But it is time to pass from these observations to the two classic races now impending. The Two Thousand and the One Thousand are upon us. Indeed, of the former race I need not write more, for it will be decided before these lines are read. About the One Thousand I may speak more fully, for that comes on Friday. Vain Duchess, a filly which, as my readers know, I have always liked, unluckily now makes a noise. The reports of her progress and style of going are excellent nevertheless, but I am inclined to prefer Mr. Leonard Brasse's daughter of St. Simon and Melody; she is a beautiful filly, and has action which cannot fail to please the intelligent observer. If she is fit and well on the day, I should expect her to be the winner. She only appeared in public in the Richmond Stakes at Goodwood, and was then a well-grown filly, with galloping quarters and good action. Since last autumn she has come on well. The Gorgon, now much fancied, who also ran at Goodwood, could then make no struggle at all with Simon Dale, and I do not fancy her. They say she has improved very much, but I doubt her winning against either Vain Duchess or Winifreda. Martin rides the former; the jockey for the latter I have not heard of. I would remind my readers that we shall probably see Forfarshire in public at Newmarket. It is not likely that he will have very much, if anything, to beat; but it will give many people an opportunity of seeing his fine action and noting that, big as he is (16h. 2in.), he should be able with those finely-laid shoulders to come down the Epsom hill, dreaded by owners of big colts, with ease and safety. To pass on to the Jubilee Stakes, so far as can be judged, Goblet should have a good chance. It is quite certain that on the City and Suburban form The Grafter could not give the weight (13lb.) to the grey. Goblet was certainly not at his best at Epsom, and the gallop will do him good and improve his chance. I shall not be inclined in any case to lay much stress on the City and Suburban form, as The Grafter was fortunate to win. Fascination was knocked over by Strike-a-Light, who probably extinguished her own chance by the accident. Innocence was shut in; had he gone round he might well have won. There is every temptation to exaggerate The Grafter's form, and though a horse can but win his races, yet the Australian does not look like making an Ascot Cup horse later in the season.

No amount of racing would be complete without a notice of Punchestown, the most interesting and delightful of chasing fixtures. Considering the absence of the soldiers, who always muster in numbers, there was a great gathering. The weather was good, the crowd happy, and Princess Christian, who was present, received a splendid welcome. It would be absurd for an occasional visitor to say much about Irish racing form, but the fine finish of Captain Dewhurst on Lady Hesketh's Spark in the Kildare Hunt Cup had a good deal to do with the victory, and was well worth seeing. Captain Loder's Covert Hack won the Conyngham Cup in the hands of Mr. G. S. Davies, and might have been near in the Grand National.

The past week has been marked by two excellent exhibitions of riding. Mornington Cannon's jockeyship in the Great Metropolitan was worthy of his position, and Martin's finish on Orias was very good, but if he can ride as well as that why does he give us such inferior work sometimes? On Saturday at Sandown Fossicker was supposed to be a certainty for the St. James's Plate, which was won by Rigolet after a close finish, with Lady Derry the second favourite. Mr. Ripley rode a good race on the winner, and deserved the thanks of the bookmakers. Another race worthy of note last week was the victory of the Polly Eccles colt at Epsom. Remembering the race between this colt and the Schoolbook filly we can draw our conclusions about the latter. Mr. Musker's fortune seems too good to last; but perhaps we may look upon the disqualifica-

tion of Downham at Newmarket as the necessary sacrifice to Nemesis.
VEDETTE.

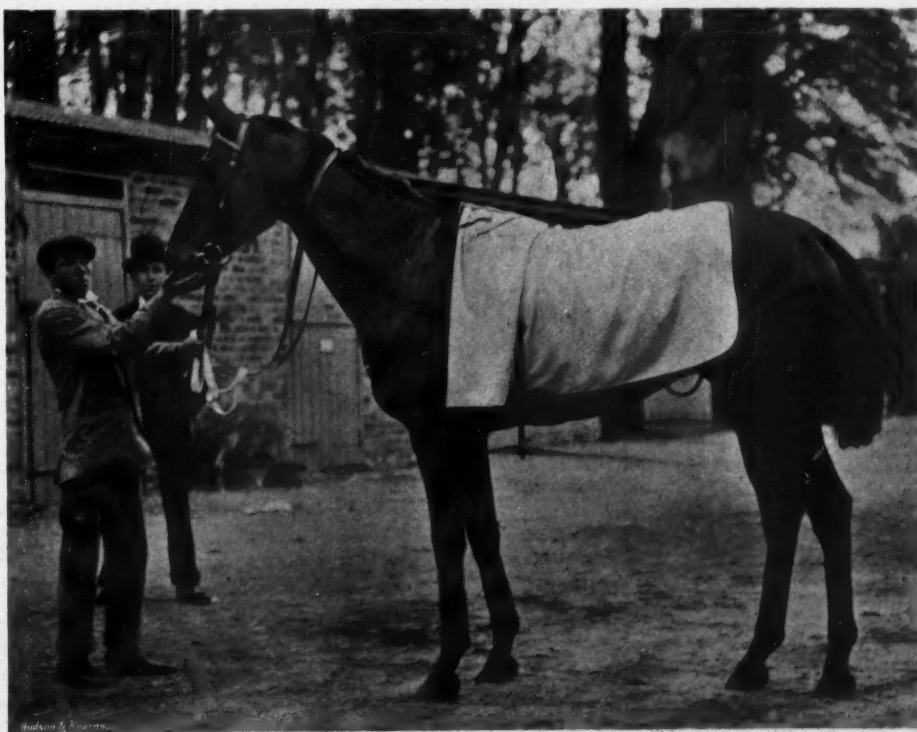
THE LATE FIELD TRIALS.

THE remarks made about the performances of individual dogs in COUNTRY LIFE turned out to be truly prophetic. It was then stated that in spite of an aged pointer, Faskally Bragg, having carried off premier honours on two occasions, that the best work seen up to the time of writing was done by two puppies, one of which was Compton Sam. This setter puppy belongs to Mr. Warwick, was bred by Elias Bishop, and defeated all the old dogs for the champion prize at the last and best attended meeting of this spring. The national field trials which are generally held in

the neighbourhood of Shrewsbury were by far the best attended, both by dogs and men. Twenty puppies ran in place of the eleven runners at the Kennel Club Meeting.

Another remark was equally lucky, as Mr. Butter's brace of pointers which got second at the Kennel Club Meeting were too highly placed, and they were defeated next day at the International Pointer and Setter Society's Meeting by the brace of setters that should at the Kennel Club's Meeting have had their position, judging by the work done. Eleven braces tried conclusions at the international; amongst them there were no foreigners to indicate the international character of the event. The meeting came off near Bandon, in Norfolk, on Friday, April 20th, with Mr. A. W. Legard and Mr. S. Senale for judges, but it was not a great success. In fact, it may be regarded as the first fiasco this society has had, and this was so only because the ground was not well enough stocked with birds to make trials satisfactory. Besides the different positions of second and third braces, as indicated above, nothing happened that had not been previously settled, as Mr. B. J. Warwick was again successful in winning first with Compton Dinah and Compton Beauty, Mr. Fred Lowe came second with Maud of Kippen and Cherry Picker, and Mr. A. E. Butter third with his second string, Romp Faskally and Revel Faskally, not the same brace as the winners of second the day before, although they also ran and did rather badly, repeating the faults previously noticed.

Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, April 24th, 25th, and 26th were devoted to the national trials on the estate of Colonel Cotes, at Pitchford, and also on the Condoover Estate, seven miles out from Shrewsbury. These estates generally hold plenty of partridges, but on this occasion they were hard to find in the quantities required for successful trials. Three long days, from 10 a.m. to 6.30 p.m., were spent trudging after the dogs; moreover, good work was not always done



W. A. Rouch. OSBECH AFTER WINNING THE CENTURY STAKES.

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when game was there, and the usual complaint of no scent was heard in most quarters. However, some of the dogs never failed to find game, and performed well whenever and wherever their turns came. Mr. C. J. Antrobus and Rev. W. Serjeantson were this time the judges. Several old competitors put in their first appearance for the season, and some others who had formerly competed were absent; amongst these was Mr. W. Arkwright's team. Sir Watkin Wynn, who often hunts his own dogs at the autumn grouse trials, although present, had no dogs entered, but altogether there was a very representative entry. Mr. Hatfield-Harter's Cranfield Druce beat the winners of the previous trials for the pointer

puppy stakes, showing once more that it is not safe to say who has got the best dogs of the season until we have been to Shrewsbury to see. Mr. Butter's Rex Faskally too; second and Mr. Lloyd's Totnes Boy third. The work done by the young pointers may be characterised as smart but wild, and those which were the less wild gained the day. The aged pointers were outworked by Colonel Cote's Carl, a fast, good game finder, who would rather run the risk of flushing birds than be outdone in the matter of pace and high ranging. Colonel Cotes always has the same sort, and will have none of your pokers.

The best of the setter puppies we had already seen, although Colonel Cotes and Mr. Llewellyn entered puppies new to us. Ightfield Gaby, winner at the Setter Club Stakes, was entered, but owing to some accident was out of form and did not run. This left Compton Sam—who had, running against the last-named puppy at Woburn, shown us what he could do when he liked—in supreme command of the field, although his first run with Dan Wind'em was a near thing. The latter, however, afterwards went wild, and showed himself but half broken. Sam was always a little the better with every dog that came against him. Mr. T. Williams's Gem of Gerwn (second prize) would have done good work had not a better been there to do it for him. Mr. Elias Bishop's Cherry Blossom was third, without having set the Thames on fire. She is another own sister to Compton Sam, and by her win assists to place Elias Bishop's strain of English setters at the top of the tree for this year at any rate. Elias Bishop has been persistently sticking to the breeding of setters for many years—always with some success and always improving a little. Now he has fairly distanced everybody for the quality of his workers; they got none too many of the awards at Shrewsbury, for in the Cloverly Stakes for braces the previous winning brace at three meetings got nothing, although they did considerably less flushing than the old brace hunted by Mr. Llewellyn, which took second. Mr. Butter's Faskally Bragg and Faskally Belle got the award of first for braces. They possibly were the best brace, but on this occasion an absence of birds proved salvation in the absence of much scent. A hare and one brace of birds was all the pointing they had to their credit, which is, to say the least, very little to go upon in deciding a stake. The aged setter stake was won by Crompton Beauty, Mr. Warwick's best of his very successful brace. The International Champion Stakes, £50 for first and £30 for second, brought together nine previous winners, and therefore was of greater interest than any previous stake, and brought the year's field trials to a fitting close with the victory of the puppy Sam, who beat Mr. Cheetham's Irish Tann, which took second, and distanced Captain Heywood Lonsdale's Ightfield Gaffer and Ightfield Top, Mr. A. E. Butter's Syke of Bromfield and Faskally Bragg, Mr. B. J. Warwick's Damsel of Salop, Mr. W. Walker's Tettenhall Vesta, and Mr. Llewellyn's Kitty Wind'em.

The following table shows the amounts won by each dog at the four meetings of this spring. In the brace stakes each dog is credited with a win, but the amounts are halved and each half credited to either dog.

Name of Dog and Owner.	No. of Wins.	Value.	Total.
Mr. Hatfield-Harter's Cranfield Druce	1st . . .	£50	50 0 0
Mr. Butter's Rex Faskally	2nd . . .	£20	20 0 0
Mr. Lloyd's Totnes Boy	3rd 3rd . .	£5 £5	10 0 0
Colonel Cote's Carl	1st . . .	£25	25 0 0
Mr. B. Warwick's Compton Sam	1st 1st 1st	£50 £50 £60 . .	160 0 0
Mr. T. Williams's Gem of Gerwn	2nd . . .	£20	20 0 0
Mr. Elias Bishop's Cherry Blossom	3rd . . .	£5	5 0 0
Mr. B. Warwick's Compton Beauty	1st 1st 1st	£25 £10 £12 5s.	57 5 0
Mr. G. H. Cheetham's Sam	2nd . . .	£30	30 0 0
Mr. Butter's Faskally Bragg	1st 1st 1st	£15 £50 £6 2s. 6d.	91 2 6
Mr. Butter's Faskally Belle	2nd . . .	£20	20 0 0
Mr. Llewellyn's Kitty Wind'em	1st 3rd . .	£15 £6 2s. 6d.	22 12 6
Mr. Llewellyn's Rosa Wind'em	2nd . . .	£7 10s.	7 10 0
Mr. B. Warwick's Compton Dinah	2nd . . .	£7 10s.	7 10 0
Mr. F. Lowe's Cherry Picker	1st 1st 1st	£10 £12 5s. £10 .	32 5 0
Mr. F. Lowe's Maud of Kippen	3rd 2nd . .	£5 £25 £4 . . .	34 0 0
Mr. Butter's Romp Faskally	2nd . . .	£5	5 0 0
Mr. Butter's Revel Faskally	3rd 3rd 1st	£10 £20 £1 10s. .	31 10 0
Mr. Scrutton's Persis	3rd . . .	£10	10 0 0
Mr. Manson's Cycle of Bromfield	3rd 2nd . .	£15 £10	25 0 0
Mr. Butter's Syke of Bromfield	4th . . .	£10	10 0 0
Mr. Cheetham's Honeysuckle	2nd . . .	£25	25 0 0
Mr. W. Arkwright's Saxpence	3rd . . .	£10	10 0 0
Captain Heywood Lonsdale's Ightfield Gaby	4th . . .	£10	10 0 0
Captain Heywood Lonsdale's Ightfield Duke	1st . . .	£16	16 0 0
Mr. Elias Bishop's Sunflower	2nd . . .	£8	8 0 0
Captain Heywood Lonsdale's Ightfield Top	2nd . . .	£10	10 0 0
Captain Heywood Lonsdale's Ightfield Dash	3rd . . .	£5	5 0 0
Captain Heywood Lonsdale's Ightfield Don	2nd . . .	£2 10s.	2 10 0
	2nd . . .	£2 10s.	2 10 0

From the above it will be seen that Captain Lonsdale has five winners of a total of £34; Mr. Elias Bishop, two winners of £15 between them, and yet by his breeding he has been the most successful man at the trials. Mr. W. Arkwright, one winner of £10; Mr. Cheetham, two winners, total £40; Mr. Butter, six winners between them, £200 5s. 6d.; Mr. Manson, one winner of £10; Mr. Scrutton, one of £25; Mr. F. Lowe, who has sometimes taken the biggest share of the money, has this year to be content with two winners of £39; Mr. B. Warwick three winners of £249 15s.; Mr. Llewellyn's brace, £15; Mr. T. Williams one win, £20; Colonel Cote one, £25; Mr. Lloyd one winner only, £10; and Mr. Hatfield-Harter one win, £50.

In reading the reports of the work done at spring field trials, sportsmen who

are grouse shooters should never compare with the work they see upon the moors. The difficulty of finding birds in the spring when scent-holding vegetation and cover is almost absent is very much greater than it is on the worst days—for scent—of August. In the first place, the grouse will allow the dogs to get so much nearer to them than partridges on field in which they can be seen from the distant road. Moreover, at this time of year, the scent of partridges begins to change, and some pairs of birds appear to have much more scent than others do. It is well known, of course, that when partridges and pheasants are sitting upon their eggs their scent more or less disappears. This is a wise provision of Nature, made especially for a fox-preserving country. How far this is to be accounted for by changes in the birds themselves it is not for us to say. But it is not wholly so accounted for, as we have on various occasions had proof of birds retaining their scent at other times. A wounded bird will sometimes do this in a most remarkable way, and we have seen probably the best nosed dog that ever won a field trial absolutely unable to detect the scent within a yard of the bird with the wind blowing into his teeth from the bird's direction. On other occasions falcons passing over will cause birds to behave in the same way, and at all times hawks, or even the artificial kite, make the scent very precarious, sometimes good and sometimes bad. It is always safe to say that dogs can do twice as well at home as they can at a public field trial. The number of strange dogs and strange men help to excite and prevent that sage, steady work for which we look upon the moors. Then, again, the system always has been, and always will be, more or less to give the greatest credit to the dogs which get most points when two strangers are running together. Consequently, breakers push forward their dogs at the risk of flushing and of missing birds, and this will never be altered until judges take to discrediting the dog which has missed the game. In practice it has to be discrediting both, for it is nearly impossible to remember just where a dog has been casting when birds rise behind some time after the event. This discrediting both equalises the matter, so that there is practically no reason why dogs should not be pushed forward to get the first points at field trials, and no reason why they should in shooting. This makes all the difference, and it is one that buyers of dogs for the moors would do well to remember. Another point that may be useful is the fact that hardly any of the owners of winners are also the breeders of them.

The International Society's autumn meeting is to take place in July on the Duke of Devonshire's celebrated moors in the neighbourhood of Chatsworth.

Commissions from the Ranks.

LORD ROBERTS has now fifty commissions at his disposal to give to men from the ranks, and up to this time seventy-eight such commissions have already been given for distinguished service in the field. By the public this is regarded as a graceful and proper form of reward for the rank and file of our Army, and an encouragement of merit of the kind most justly honoured in time of war. Nothing is more pleasant than to picture a young sergeant or corporal, at once capable and brave, raised to command where formerly he served, and perhaps rising to be colonel of the regiment in which he served as a private.

Such cases do occur. There are men in command of regiments to-day who have served in the ranks. But the men who take these offers of commissions, though thoroughly qualified to do so, are not, as a rule, of the class to which the public think they belong. The first-class sergeant or non-commissioned officer who has served in all grades and knows every detail of the soldier's life very frequently declines the commission if it is offered, and unless he is serving in India, and has also saved a little money, it is difficult to see how he could afford to take it. As these "natural born" soldiers, marked out as capable men during regimental service in peace, and further distinguished by brilliant performance of duty in the field, cannot fail to be of value to the commissioned ranks of the Army, the disabilities which prevent their sharing the chance of such promotion inflict real loss on the Army. Army expense and expenditure, the scale of living, and the first cost of equipment, uniform, and of "paying your footing" generally must, and always will, bar the way to the best non-commissioned officer who was ever offered the higher career.

One or two well-known instances of men who rose from the ranks and are now in high command will occur to everyone. What is not so well known as it ought to be is the number and excellence of those who might have done so, but in the nature of things could not and cannot. If ever a gift was offered as a huge sell and practical joke, it is this list of commissions for the ranks. They were never meant for the *bona fide* "man in the ranks" at all. At the very time it was announced the War Office had made a similar offer to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. A day or two later came a "letter missive" informing the Vice-Chancellors that any who applied for these commissions must first give a guarantee that they had a certain private income. This was fair enough, for it acknowledged that the nation does not pay its young officers enough for them to exist upon on a modest scale of expenditure, while it is well known and conceded that the standard of living is high, and not frugal. The alternative was not to accept the offer. "No money, no commission." It was fair enough as far as it went. But exactly the same problem affects the non-com. to whom the commission is to be offered after distinguished service in the field. To him the Government is less honest and outspoken. It does not say, "No money, no commission." It only says, "Here is a commission; take it if you can." But the condition remains though unspoken, and the men know it and argue in this way.

A sergeant twenty-eight years old, let us say, has saved a couple of guns by intense courage and one of the sudden inspirations which comes to men who have equipped themselves for years with a knowledge of their work. He is offered a commission, a post, that is, as second lieutenant, for he has to begin at the bottom, with 5s. per day as pay. He is at the time receiving 2s. 8d. per day as sergeant, and if he goes into a departmental corps he may make 5s. a day. He is possibly married, in which case he will not have any spare cash; if not, perhaps he may have saved £30 or £40. How is he to pay for his uniforms, which will cost him at least £60, meet the usual entrance fee subscriptions for regimental club, band, and mess expenses? The chances are he would start in debt, and even with this start as an officer, and all the chances of the profession before him, he might well prefer to remain as a sergeant and pay his way than begin as a sub-lieutenant in debt.

If money is forthcoming for these initial expenses, it is possible for the man with nothing to take a commission, provided he serves in India, where he gets double pay. To do so in England, or to come home, is quite impossible, because the second lieutenant's pay is only enough to cover two-thirds of the necessary expenses. There is only one post which the real "ranker" can afford to take, and it is one which the very best type of non-commissioned officer often fills with credit and distinction. It is the post of quartermaster. This officer receives 10s. a day pay, with the honorary rank of second lieutenant for the first five years' service, and of lieutenant after this. The duties include the control of all stores, rations, workshops, and the fabric of the barracks. It is interesting to note that the distinguished officer who controlled the despatch of all the troops from Southampton, and has just been promoted to be lieutenant-colonel, served for eight years in the ranks. Several of the officers of the Army Service and other departmental corps, which have been managed with unflinching success in South Africa, have risen from the ranks by taking service in these better-paid bodies. The few real "rankers" who do accept commissions are usually helped in unexpected ways. Sometimes a well-to-do commanding officer will provide the extra income needed. This has been known to be continued for many years. Sometimes relations, or a wife's relations, club together and find the money. But naturally this is rare and frequently impossible.

Who, then, will accept Lord Roberts's commissions? In nearly every case gentlemen who are serving in the ranks. Very many of these have entered with that intention; some because they had deferred entering for Sandhurst till too late, some because they were not allowed to be soldiers when young, and suddenly found themselves free to have their choice. Others have enlisted for less creditable reasons. But every man in the regiment is known, his history and conduct duly recorded, and if he rises to be a non-commissioned officer, it is sufficient guarantee not only to the colonel, but to his relations that he is steady and worth helping, and when the commission is offered the help is generally forthcoming. To all these, who often make the very best class of officer, acquainted with the ways and work of the ranks, though not taken from the material of which the ranks are mainly composed, this war, with its chances and commissions, does offer a great opening and a career. But those without connection, or money, and only dependent on solid merit cannot afford to grasp the brilliant prize, and must forego the coveted position. Would it be indelicate to suggest that the offer of a commission to a man in the ranks should always carry with it the sum of, say, £100 necessary for the purchase of the uniforms and the minimum "entrance" expenses? It is certain that unless this is done many brave and capable men can never enjoy the most appropriate reward that the Service could give to them. Money grants in the form of pensions are made to officers late in life, and it seems a needless distinction to withhold such a grant in cash at the threshold of the career.



AVICULTURE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—During the past few years there can be no doubt that the ranks of poultry keepers have been largely augmented in this country, thanks in no inconsiderable degree to the exertions of the Utility Poultry Club, the members of which have laboured earnestly to instruct the public on the subject of the most prolific laying breeds of fowls. Unfortunately, however, there has up to a comparatively recent period been no organised attempt made to place within the reach of the British and Irish poultry raiser an adequate system

under which these persons can dispose of the products of their yards; but happily within the last few months the National Poultry Organisation Society has been established, with the object of supplying this want. Hitherto it must be confessed that the society, which is supported by many members of the aristocracy and enthusiasts of the poultry-breeding industry, has not succeeded in accomplishing very great results; but this can in no way detract from the merits of its objects, nor is it reasonable to expect much progress to be made by such a body during the first few months of its existence. It lies, however, well within the power of many of the readers of COUNTRY LIFE to assist the working of the Organisation Society in their respective districts, by acquainting the farmers and cottagers of the existence of the society, and by encouraging them in a determination to provide eggs and table poultry, for which a market will be found them provided a sufficient supply can be produced to justify arrangements being made. There is no doubt at all that this country is as well, if not better, adapted for the production of poultry than many of those from which we annually derive supplies in exchange for many thousands of pounds which should never be permitted to leave these shores; nor is there any denying the fact that, thanks to the increased number of poultry shows held, and, to some extent, to the public lectures which have been delivered, the general knowledge of the science of poultry keeping has been extended. It has not always been the case that the lecturers appointed to instruct the provincials have been as proficient in the subjects upon which they discourse as could be desired, but there can be no gainsaying the fact that there are undoubted evidences of an increased interest in poultry keeping, and from this the best results should emanate. I venture, therefore, to appeal to country gentlemen and ladies for their assistance in the way of bringing before the notice of their humbler neighbours the expediency of combining with the object of availing themselves of the advantages offered by the National Poultry Organisation Society or any other kindred body. The chief obstacle that I can see in the path of success at present is the difficulty of providing a constant supply which may be adequate to the demand and no more, for if the market becomes overstocked in any district prices will of course fall; but with a central body such as that just named there are superior facilities for distribution throughout the entire country, and consequently the continental methods for the forwarding of such produce can be easily imitated. There is one more point to which I desire, with your permission, to draw attention, and this is, that the question is not merely a philanthropic one, but a matter which concerns every consumer of eggs or poultry in the country, as fresh goods of these descriptions are more wholesome and nutritious than those which may come from long distances abroad. At present we are actually receiving table poultry from the Antipodes and Russia, for the simple reason that, although our own countrymen are perfectly well able to supply the same, they are either too neglectful of their own interests to do so, or else do not possess the means of marketing their produce. A little judicious encouragement from their social superiors would doubtless influence thousands of cottagers and others to add to their incomes and benefit the community by devoting increased attention to their poultry, but the matter is one which many of them do not at present understand, though, if the possibility of finding a profitable market were to be brought to their knowledge, there can be no doubt that they would gladly avail themselves of the facilities afforded them, with the result that the money now expended upon the foreigner would remain at home, to the benefit of all parties concerned.—AVICULTURIST.

BLOOD MANURE—A WARNING!

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Last week's issue contained a letter asking for advice on this as a manure. A similar letter appeared a few weeks ago, and I then intended to give these words of warning, but intentions are not deeds, alas! I will no longer delay. Many years ago, when in medical practice, I was much struck by a paper by Dr. Carpenter of Croydon (I think), one of our earliest sanitary reformers. He narrated about a dozen instances of scarlet fever arising in houses where blood had been exposed to the influence of the atmosphere, and he argued from this that under certain conditions of the air and the weather such exposure might generate scarlet fever *de novo*. Two of the instances are fixed on my memory. In his rounds he saw some children playing round a manure heap on which some blood had been thrown, and in a few days scarlet fever appeared amongst the children living in the cottages surrounding that manure heap. The other instance was of a school in a large isolated house. On the adjoining field he saw that a quantity of manure and blood had been spread, and in a few days scarlet fever broke out amongst the inmates of that house. Of course, it is scarcely possible to determine these cases as cause and effect, but at least they make one reflect, and it seems to me wisdom to avoid the use of blood manure, of somewhat doubtful value, according to your remarks, and not run the risk of so grave and distressing a disease as scarlet fever can be. I have known it kill a lady, who walked into the room to see me one day, begging me to look at her throat, and who died within twenty-four hours, just as the rash was appearing. Numbers of cases do arise where no exposure to infection can be made out, it surely then is right to avoid the use of such exposure of blood, where a tried observer has seemed to connect the two.—G. B. A. Z. (M.R.C.S.L., retired).

A PLAGUE OF MAGPIES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—A few weeks ago I saw a letter under the above heading in your columns. The writer enquired how he could exterminate magpies. Now I do not know whether what is sauce for the jay would be sauce for the magpie too, but it might be worth trying. The way the keepers kill down the jays, which are more of a pest than the magpies in the districts I know best, is to get a young jay and tie him up by the leg. He makes such a squalling that all the jays within hearing (and he makes himself heard a long way) come to see what is the matter, and examine the case so closely that there is no trouble in shooting them from a *cache* conveniently contrived. As I say, I never heard of this being tried with magpies, but probably a young magpie would squawk just as loudly as a jay, and the magpies have their full share of corvine curiosity, so that they would probably come to see what the matter was just as readily as the jays. At least it could do no harm trying, and as the nesting season is just at hand there is an excellent opportunity of making the experiment. Should your correspondent try it, it would be interesting to hear whether it met with success.—H.

AN ALERT LITTLE BEGGAR.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—A charming little country cousin has just come to town to beg for funds for the widows and orphans of our brave soldiers and sailors so gallantly fighting for Queen and country in South Africa. This latest recruit to the noble army of animal beggars is Pretty Good, Mrs. Young's handsome pony, who has been

creating an immense sensation in the Park, at Prince's Skating Club, and at Tattersall's, as well as in various West End streets and squares. Equipped with a Union Jack saddle-cloth, on which his collecting-box rests, he proves an irresistible advocate, worthy of the name of B. iton. Pretty Good is going to Brighton for



a few days to pursue his occupation of asking alms on the coast, where, no doubt, his appeal will be as generously responded to as it has been in London. On his return to town he will again resume his work of collecting. He has been invited to stand one day in the hall of the London Hippodrome, and another in the Hotel Cecil. He has already collected over £17 (which his mistress has forwarded to the Mansion House Fund), and made himself a crowd of new friends. Pretty Good (189, S.P.S.B.) is a lovely specimen of a Shetland pony, standing 36in. at the shoulder; he is six years old, and very active and clever, he can leap a bar his own height, which he can also run under when he so pleases. He thinks nothing of a ten-mile trot in Mrs. Young's cart, and comes in as fresh after it as if he had only just left his stable. —BEAGLE.

PLANTS IN A LONDON GREENHOUSE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have a fellow feeling with your correspondent who is in difficulties with his London conservatory, and shall be pleased if my experience is of any use to him. First, I find everything does best in little box beds. Several ferns in one with an area of about a square yard and a foot deep (well drained) do far better than the same number in separate pots. My boxes happen to be triangular, fitting into corners. In these aspidistra flourishes, is always green, and sends up leaves above a yard long. The common forked-tipped fern, sold in little 2d. or 4d. pots, spreads and is evergreen; so is another cheap kind with broad pinnate leaves. Bulbs do well, but do not flower the second year. The polyanthus narcissus of various sorts does best. An acanthus grown from seed has been a great success and is an interesting experiment; it is now two years old, and remained green all the winter. For the walls, small-leaved ivy does well for a time, but to be really ornamental needs renewing; the old plants grow dusky and bare. Fuchsias cover the wall well in the course of years, but, of course, are not evergreen. I have no heat except in very cold weather, and then only an open pan of boiling water kept hot over a gas-burner. Geraniums and soft-leaved plants become mildewed and get green fly. I do not find native ferns a success; they need the open air. As I do not know the names of the two ferns I allude to, I enclose a leaf of each. You will be able to give their names.—G.

[One of the ferns (with narrow fronds) was *Pteris serrulata*, the other *Cytomium falcatum*.—ED.]

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I see in your charming paper, which I always read with so much pleasure, that a correspondent writes to know "What plants he can have in his little greenhouse in London." I can do him a good turn, and do so willingly. In the first place he must get a Davis's gas boiler (Davis and Co., in Camberwell). Put this boiler outside the greenhouse, and cover it over with zinc to protect it from rain, etc. It will heat two pipes, flow and return, and one can regulate the gas. Now as to plants. Your correspondent must get *Lapageria rosea*. Get several of them, train them on wires, and they will do fairly well and give plenty of flowers in July. Get also some cissus, which will do well and give foliage all the year round. *Cobaea scandens* will not do except in summer. The *Clematis* also succeeds fairly well, but loses its foliage in winter. I would also procure two or three hoyas, which will do well. No one can possibly have had more experience of suitable plants for London houses than I have, and I am only too glad to help your correspondent.—GEORGE POLE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have struggled with a little London greenhouse, and can heartily sympathise with your correspondent's difficulties. I also found that geraniums would not do. They were leggy and anemic-looking. What I have found successful are the following plants: *Imantophyllum*, *streptocarpus*, *Acacia armata*, lilies of several kinds, and fuchsias. Besides these flowering plants, several hardy

ferns and the patient and cheerful aspidistra, which seems to bear any situation or treatment with equanimity. Fuchsias grow and flower splendidly. *Imantophyllums* last on for years, and can be increased by division without difficulty. They are most satisfactory, as they are evergreen and have a splendid flower, which appears on my plants about April. My greenhouse is very tiny and I keep out frost with an oil stove. I do not attempt to do more than just keep out frost. What my greenhouse suffers cruelly from is the absence of its owner. When I am away for April, August, and September the caretaker usually lets the plants get very dry during the early part of my absence, and then, to let me know what constant care and attention he has been lavishing on them, deluges them with water for a day or two before my return. However, the plants I have named survive even that.—M. A. V.

KINGSTON LACY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In thanking you for the views of this house in your excellent series, I should like to be allowed to point out more than one difficulty which I find in the account which accompanies them. The writer gives 1660 as the date when the house was begun (which is no doubt correct, the date 1663 appearing in the pediment of the north front and indicating when the work was finished), "from the designs of Inigo Jones, whose work and general plan still remain." Jones died in 1652, so that although it does not follow that he had nothing to do with the general scheme, as he might have left drawings for it, it is certain that he did not carry out the actual work. A comparison with Coleshill, which was attributed in the last century by Ware to Inigo Jones, and which, from its own evidence, I believe to be by him, though I do not know of actual proof, shows great similarity, though Kingston Hall lacks the largeness and—since Barry's additions—the simplicity of that admirable Berkshire house. A view of Kingston is given in Neale's "Mansions of England," 1847, which shows clearly the extent of the modern alterations and additions. Everything above the main cornice is modern, and it would seem as if Barry had added the outer chimneys and the cupola in order to make it look more like Coleshill than it already did. The writer says these alterations were made by Barry in 1834. Though unimportant, should this not be 1854, Neale's view, 1847, showing the house in its old simple form? My excuse for troubling you with this is the great desire I feel to separate the true from the false in the enormous number of buildings which have been attributed to our great Stuart architect. Your view of the garden entrance on the east side is entitled "Inigo Jones's Garden Stairs." Again supported by Neale's views, I venture to say that this, including the triple arches, columns, and entablature should be called Sir Charles Barry's Garden Entrance. It is hardly necessary to point out how invaluable would be any actual documentary evidence of the employment of Jones that the owners of houses in your series could communicate to you. —W. NIVEN.

A CURIOUS LILIUM AURATUM.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I enclose a photograph of a curious freak of *Lilium auratum* grown at Ramsbottom, near Manchester, a single bulb producing ninety-five blooms on one stem, each flower large and quite perfect.—M. A.

[We thank you heartily for this interesting representation of a freak of *Lilium auratum*, but such departures from the normal form are not unusual.—ED.]

CROCUSES IN A LONDON GARDEN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The enclosed photograph shows crocuses in a London garden. It is interesting as it shows the excellent result produced by an unrelenting warfare against sparrows and cats.—M. ST. Q. KAVE.

[This is an interesting display of crocuses upon the grass, and is more instructive than the crude masses too often seen jumbled together without a thought as to colour contrast or any pretty way of planting. It is very pleasant on a sunny March day to see the crocuses open wide in the sun, and, as the illustration shows, sparrows can be kept away if serious efforts are made to do so.—ED.]

